



Illustrated Sterling Edition

NIGHT AND MORNING

LEILA

OR, THE SIEGE OF GRANADA

PAUSANIAS THE SPARTAN

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON



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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE C. T. D'EYNCOURT, M.P.,
THIS WORK,
IN PART COMPOSED UNDER HIS HOSPITABLE ROOF,
Is Dedicated,
AS A SLIGHT MEMORIAL OF AFFECTIONATE FRIENDSHIP
AND SINCERE ESTEEM.

KNEBWORTH, 1845.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1845.

MUCH has been written by critics, especially by those in Germany, the native land of criticism, upon the important question whether to please or to instruct should be the end of Fiction; whether a moral purpose is or is not in harmony with the undidactic spirit perceptible in the higher works of the imagination. And the general result of the discussion has been in favour of those who have contended that Moral Design, rigidly so called, should be excluded from the aims of the Poet; that his Art should regard only the Beautiful, and be contented with the indirect moral *tendencies*, which can never fail the creation of the Beautiful. Certainly, in fiction, to interest, to please, and sportively to elevate, — to take man from the low passions and the miserable troubles of life into a higher region; to beguile weary and selfish pain; to excite a genuine sorrow at vicissitudes not his own; to raise the passions into sympathy with heroic struggles, — and to admit the soul into that serener atmosphere from which it rarely returns to ordinary existence without some memory or association which ought to enlarge the domain of thought and exalt the motives of action, — such, without other moral result or object, may satisfy the Poet,¹ and constitute the highest and most universal morality he can effect. But subordinate to this, which is not the duty but the *necessity* of all

¹ I use the word "poet" in its proper sense, as applicable to any writer, whether in verse or prose, who invents or creates.

Fiction that outlasts the hour, the writer of imagination may well permit to himself other purposes and objects, taking care that they be not too sharply defined, and too obviously meant to contract the Poet into the Lecturer, the Fiction into the Homily. The delight in Shylock is not less vivid for the Humanity it latently but profoundly inculcates; the healthful merriment of the "Tartuffe" is not less enjoyed for the exposure of the Hypocrisy it denounces. We need not demand from Shakspeare or from Molière other morality than that which Genius unconsciously throws around it, — the natural light which it reflects; but if some great principle which guides us practically in the daily intercourse with men becomes in the general lustre more clear and more pronounced, we gain doubly, — by the general tendency and the particular result.

Long since, in searching for new regions in the Art to which I am a servant, it seemed to me that they might be found lying far, and rarely trodden, beyond that range of conventional morality in which Novelist after Novelist had entrenched himself, amongst those subtle recesses in the ethics of human life in which Truth and Falsehood dwell undisturbed and unseparated. The vast and dark Poetry around us, the Poetry of Modern Civilization and Daily Existence, is shut out from us in much by the shadowy giants of Prejudice and Fear. He who would arrive at the Fairy Land must face the Phantoms. Betimes, I set myself to the task of investigating the motley world to which our progress in humanity has attained, caring little what misrepresentation I incurred, what hostility I provoked, in searching through a devious labyrinth for the foot-tracks of Truth.

In the pursuit of this object, I am, not vainly, conscious that I have had my influence on my time; that I have

contributed, though humbly and indirectly, to the benefits which Public Opinion has extorted from Governments and Laws. While (to content myself with a single example) the ignorant or malicious were decrying the moral of "Paul Clifford," I consoled myself with perceiving that its truths had stricken deep, — that many whom formal essays might not reach were enlisted by the picture and the popular force of Fiction into the service of that large and Catholic Humanity which frankly examines into the causes of crime; which ameliorates the ills of society by seeking to amend the circumstances by which they are occasioned, and commences the great work of justice to mankind by proportioning the punishment to the offence. That work, I know, had its share in the wise and great relaxation of our Criminal Code; it has had its share in results yet more valuable because leading to more comprehensive reforms, — namely, in the courageous facing of the ills which the mock decorum of timidity would shun to contemplate, but which, till fairly fronted in the spirit of practical Christianity, sap daily, more and more, the walls in which blind Indolence would protect itself from restless Misery and rampant Hunger. For it is not till Art has told the unthinking that nothing, *rightly treated*, is too low for its breath to vivify and its wings to raise, that the Herd awaken from their chronic lethargy of contempt, and the Lawgiver is compelled to redress what the Poet has lifted into esteem. In thus enlarging the boundaries of the Novelist from trite and conventional to untrodden ends, I have seen, not with the jealousy of an Author but with the pride of an Originator, that I have served as a guide to later and abler writers, both in England and abroad. If at times, while imitating, they have mistaken me, I am not answerable for their errors; or if, more often, they have improved where they borrowed, I am not envious of their laurels.

They owe me at least this, — that I prepared the way for their reception, and that they would have been less popular and more misrepresented, if the outcry which bursts upon the first researches into new directions had not exhausted its noisy vehemence upon me.

In this Novel of "Night and Morning" I have had various ends in view, — subordinate, I grant, to the higher and more durable morality which belongs to the Ideal, and instructs us playfully while it interests in the passions and through the heart. First, to deal fearlessly with that universal unsoundness in social justice which makes distinctions so marked and iniquitous between Vice and Crime, — namely, between the corrupting habits and the violent act; which scarce touches the former with the lightest twig in the fasces; which lifts against the latter the edge of the Lictor's axe. Let a child steal an apple in sport, let a starveling steal a roll in despair, and Law conducts them to the Prison, for evil commune to mellow them for the gibbet. But let a man spend one apprenticeship from youth to old age in vice, let him devote a fortune, perhaps colossal, to the wholesale demoralization of his kind, and he may be surrounded with the adulation of the so-called virtuous, and be served upon its knee by that Lackey, the Modern World! I say not that Law can, or that Law should, reach the Vice as it does the Crime; but I say that Opinion may be more than the servile shadow of Law. I impress not here, as in "Paul Clifford," a material moral to work its effect on the Journals, at the Hustings, through Constituents, and on Legislation; I direct myself to a channel less active, more tardy, but as sure, — to the Conscience that reigns, elder and superior to all Law, in men's hearts and souls. I utter boldly and loudly a truth, if not all untold, murmured feebly and falteringly before; sooner or later it will find its way into the judgment and the conduct,

and shape out a tribunal which requires not robe or ermine.

Secondly, in this work I have sought to lift the mask from the timid selfishness which too often with us bears the name of "Respectability." Purposely avoiding all attraction that may savour of extravagance, patiently subduing every tone and every hue to the aspect of those whom we meet daily in our thoroughfares, I have shown in Robert Beaufort the man of decorous phrase and bloodless action, the systematic self-server, in whom the world forgive the lack of all that is generous, warm, and noble in order to respect the passive acquiescence in methodical conventions and hollow forms. And how common such men are with us in this century, and how inviting and how necessary their delineation, may be seen in this, — that the popular and pre-eminent Observer of the age in which we live has since placed their prototype in vigorous colours upon imperishable canvas.¹

There is yet another object with which I have identified my tale. I trust that I am not insensible to such advantages as arise from the diffusion of education really sound and knowledge really available; for these, as the right of my countrymen, I have contended always. But of late years there has been danger that what ought to be an important truth may be perverted into a pestilent fallacy. Whether for rich or for poor, disappointment must ever await the endeavour to give knowledge without labour and experience without trial. Cheap literature and popular treatises do not in themselves suffice to fit the nerves of man for the strife below, and lift his aspirations in healthful confidence above. He who seeks to divorce toil from knowledge deprives knowledge of its most valuable property, — the strengthening of the mind by exercise. We

¹ Need I say that I allude to the Pecksniff of Mr. Dickens?

learn what really braces and elevates us only in proportion to the *effort* it costs us. Nor is it in Books alone, nor in Books chiefly, that we are made conscious of our strength as Men; Life is the great Schoolmaster, Experience the mighty Volume. He who has made one stern sacrifice of self has acquired more than he will ever glean from the odds and ends of popular philosophy; and the man the least scholastic may be more robust in the power that *is* knowledge, and approach nearer to the Arch-Seraphim, than Bacon himself, if he cling fast to two simple maxims,—“Be honest in temptation, and in Adversity believe in God.” Such moral, attempted before in “Eugene Aram,” I have enforced more directly here; and out of such convictions I have created hero and heroine, placing them in their primitive and natural characters—with aid more from life than books; from courage the one, from affection the other—amidst the feeble Hermaphrodites of our sickly civilization,—examples of resolute Manhood and tender Womanhood.

The opinions I have here put forth are not in fashion at this day, but I have never consulted the popular any more than the sectarian Prejudice. Alone and unaided I have hewn out my way, from first to last, by the force of my own convictions. The corn springs up in the field centuries after the first sower is forgotten. Works may perish with the workman; but, if truthful, their results are in the works of others, imitating, borrowing, enlarging, and improving, in the everlasting Cycle of Industry and Thought.

KNEBWORTH, 1845.

NOTE TO THE PRESENT EDITION, 1851.

I HAVE nothing to add to the preceding pages, written six years ago, as to the objects and aims of this work, except to say, and by no means as a boast, that the work lays claims to one kind of interest which I certainly never desired to effect for it,—namely, in exemplifying the glorious uncertainty of the Law. For, humbly aware of the blunders which Novelists not belonging to the legal profession are apt to commit when they summon to the *dénouement* of a plot the aid of a deity so mysterious as Themis, I submitted to an eminent lawyer the whole case of “Beaufort *versus* Beaufort,” as it stands in this Novel; and the pages which refer to that suit were not only written from the opinion annexed to the brief I sent in, but submitted to the eye of my counsel and revised by his pen. (N.B. He was feed.) Judge then my dismay when I heard long afterwards that the late Mr. O’Connell disputed the soundness of the law I had thus bought and paid for! “Who shall decide when doctors disagree?” All I can say is, that I took the best opinion that love or money could get me; and I should add, that my lawyer, unawed by the alleged *ipse dixit* of the great Agitator (to be sure, he is dead), still stoutly maintains his own views of the

question.¹ Let me hope that the right heir will live long enough to come under the Statute of Limitations. Possession is nine points of the law, and Time may give the tenth.

KNEBORTH.

¹ I have, however, thought it prudent so far to meet the objection suggested by Mr. O'Connell as to make a slight alteration in this edition, which will probably prevent the objection, if correct, being of any material practical effect on the disposition of that visionary El Dorado, the Beaufort Property.

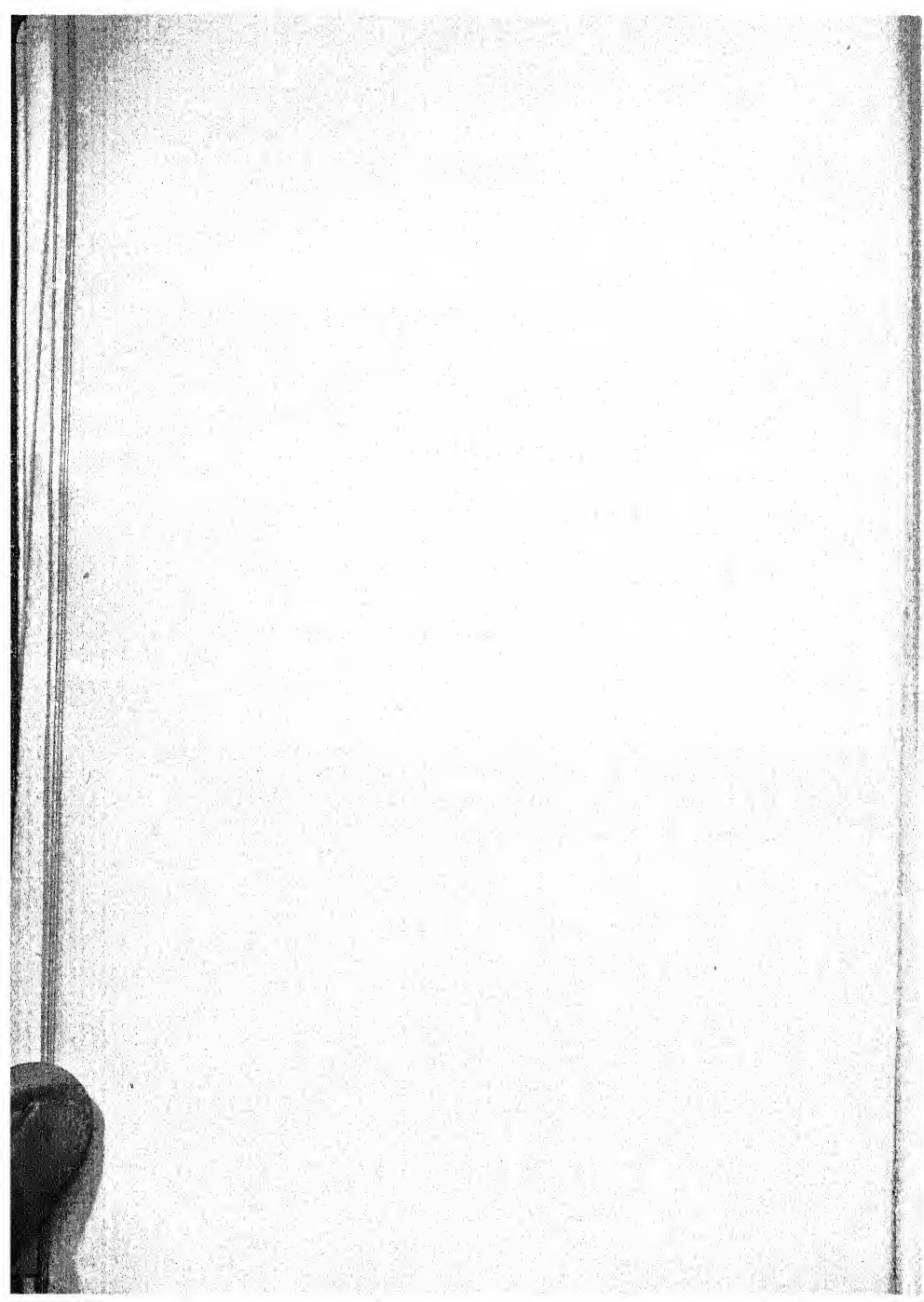
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NIGHT AND MORNING.

BOOK I.

Noch in meines Lebens Lenze
War ich und ich wandert' aus,
Und der Jugend frohe Tänze
Sieß ich in des Vaters Haus.

SCHILLER, *Der Pilgrim*.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Now rests our vicar. They who knew him best
Proclaim his life to have been entirely rest;
Nor one so old has left this world of sin
More like the being that he entered in. — CRABBE.

IN one of the Welsh counties is a small village called A——. It is somewhat removed from the high road, and is therefore but little known to those luxurious amateurs of the picturesque who view Nature through the windows of a carriage and four. Nor, indeed, is there anything, whether of scenery or association, in the place itself sufficient to allure the more sturdy enthusiast from the beaten tracks which tourists and guide-books prescribe to those who search the Sublime and Beautiful amidst the mountain homes of the ancient Britons. Still, on the whole, the village is not without its attractions. It is placed in a small valley, through which winds and leaps down many a rocky fall a clear, babbling, noisy rivulet, that affords excellent sport to the brethren of the angle. Thither, accordingly, in the summer season occa-

sionally resort the Waltons of the neighbourhood, — young farmers, retired traders, with now and then a stray artist, or a roving student from one of the Universities. Hence the solitary hostelry of A——, being somewhat more frequented, is also more clean and comfortable than could reasonably be anticipated from the insignificance and remoteness of the village.

At a time in which my narrative opens, the village boasted a sociable, agreeable, careless, half-starved parson, who never failed to introduce himself to any of the anglers who during the summer months passed a day or two in the little valley. The Rev. Mr. Caleb Price had been educated at the University of Cambridge, where he had contrived, in three years, to run through a little fortune of £3,500. It is true that he acquired in return the art of making milk-punch, the science of pugilism, and the reputation of one of the best-natured, rattling, open-hearted companions whom you could desire by your side in a tandem to Newmarket, or in a row with the bargemen. By the help of these gifts and accomplishments, he had not failed to find favour while his money lasted with the young aristocracy of the "Gentle Mother;" and though the very reverse of an ambitious or calculating man, he had certainly nourished the belief that some one of the "hats" or "tinsel gowns" — that is, young lords or fellow-commoners, with whom he was on such excellent terms and who supped with him so often — would do something for him in the way of a living. But it so happened that when Mr. Caleb Price had, with a little difficulty, scrambled through his degree, and found himself a Bachelor of Arts and at the end of his finances, his grand acquaintances parted from him to their various posts in the State Militant of Life; and with the exception of one, joyous and reckless as himself, Mr. Caleb Price found that when Money makes itself wings, it flies away with our friends. As poor Price had earned no academical distinction, so he could expect no advancement from his college, — no fellowship, no tutorship leading hereafter to livings, stalls, and deaneries. Poverty began already to stare him in the face, when the only friend who, having shared his prosperity, remained true to his adverse fate, — a friend, for-

tunately for him, of high connections and brilliant prospects, — succeeded in obtaining for him the humble living of A——. To this primitive spot the once jovial roisterer cheerfully retired; contrived to live contented upon an income somewhat less than he had formerly given to his groom; preached very short sermons to a very scanty and ignorant congregation, some of whom only understood Welsh; did good to the poor and sick in his own careless, slovenly way; and, uncheered or unvexed by wife and children, he rose in summer with the lark and in winter went to bed at nine precisely, to save coals and candles. For the rest, he was the most skilful angler in the whole county; and so willing to communicate the results of his experience as to the most taking colour of the flies and the most favoured haunts of the trout, that he had given especial orders at the inn that whenever any strange gentleman came to fish, Mr. Caleb Price should be immediately sent for. In this, to be sure, our worthy pastor had his usual recompense: First, if the stranger were tolerably liberal, Mr. Price was asked to dinner at the inn; and secondly, if this failed, from the poverty or the churlishness of the obliged party, Mr. Price still had an opportunity to hear the last news, to talk about the Great World, — in a word, to exchange ideas, and perhaps to get an old newspaper, or an odd number of a magazine.

Now it so happened that one afternoon in October, when the periodical excursions of the anglers, becoming gradually rarer and more rare, had altogether ceased, Mr. Caleb Price was summoned from his parlour, in which he had been employed in the fabrication of a net for his cabbages, by a little white-headed boy, who came to say there was a gentleman at the inn who wished immediately to see him, — a strange gentleman, who had never been there before.

Mr. Price threw down his net, seized his hat, and in less than five minutes he was in the best room of the little inn.

The person there awaiting him was a man who, though plainly clad in a velveteen shooting-jacket, had an air and mien greatly above those common to the pedestrian visitors of A——. He was tall, and of one of those athletic forms in

which vigour in youth is too often followed by corpulence in age. At this period, however, in the full prime of manhood, the ample chest and sinewy limbs, seen to full advantage in their simple and manly dress, could not fail to excite that popular admiration which is always given to strength in the one sex as to delicacy in the other. The stranger was walking impatiently to and fro the small apartment when Mr. Price entered; and then, turning to the clergyman a countenance handsome and striking, but yet more prepossessing from its expression of frankness than from the regularity of its features, he stopped short, held out his hand, and said, with a gay laugh, as he glanced over the parson's threadbare and slovenly costume: "My poor Caleb, what a metamorphosis! I should not have known you again!"

"What! *you!* Is it possible, my dear fellow? How glad I am to see you! What on earth can bring you to such a place? No; not a soul would believe me if I said I had seen you in this miserable hole."

"That is precisely the reason why I am here. Sit down, Caleb, and we'll talk over matters as soon as our landlord has brought up the materials for—"

"The milk-punch," interrupted Mr. Price, rubbing his hands.

"Ah, that will bring us back to old times, indeed!"

In a few minutes the punch was prepared, and after two or three preparatory glasses, the stranger thus commenced,—

"My dear Caleb, I am in want of your assistance, and above all of your secrecy."

"I promise you both beforehand. It will make me happy the rest of my life to think I have served my patron, my benefactor, the only friend I possess."

"Tush, man! don't talk of that: we shall do better for you one of these days. But now to the point: I have come here to be married; married, old boy! married!"

And the stranger threw himself back in his chair, and chuckled with the glee of a schoolboy.

"Humph!" said the parson, gravely. "It is a serious thing to do, and a very odd place to come to."

"I admit both propositions: this punch is superb. To proceed: you know that my uncle's immense fortune is at his own disposal. If I disoblige him, he would be capable of leaving all to my brother; I *should* disoblige him irrevocably if he knew that I had married a tradesman's daughter; I am going to marry a tradesman's daughter, — a girl in a million! The ceremony must be as secret as possible; and in this church, with you for the priest, I do not see a chance of discovery."

"Do you marry by license?"

"No; my intended is not of age, and we keep the secret even from her father. In this village you will mumble over the bans without one of your congregation ever taking heed of the name. I shall stay here a month for the purpose. She is in London, on a visit to a relation in the city. The bans on her side will be published with equal privacy in a little church near the Tower, where my name will be no less unknown than hers. Oh, I've contrived it famously!"

"But, my dear fellow, consider what you risk."

"I have considered all, and I find every chance in my favour. The bride will arrive here on the day of our wedding: my servant will be one witness; some stupid old Welshman, as antediluvian as possible, — I leave it to you to select him, — shall be the other. My servant I shall dispose of, and the rest I can depend on."

"But —"

"I detest butts; if I had to make a language, I would not admit such a word in it. And now, before I run on about Catherine, a subject quite inexhaustible, tell me, my dear friend, something about yourself."

Somewhat more than a month had elapsed since the arrival of the stranger at the village inn. He had changed his quarters for the Parsonage; went out but little, and then chiefly on foot excursions among the sequestered hills in the neighbourhood. He was therefore but partially known by sight, even in the village; and the visit of some old college friend to the minister, though indeed it had never chanced before,

was not in itself so remarkable an event as to excite any particular observation. The bans had been duly, and half audibly, hurried over, after the service was concluded and while the scanty congregation were dispersing down the little aisle of the church, — when one morning a chaise and pair arrived at the Parsonage. A servant out of livery leaped from the box. The stranger opened the door of the chaise, and, uttering a joyous exclamation, gave his arm to a lady, who trembling and agitated could scarcely, even with that stalwart support, descend the steps. “Ah!” she said, in a voice choked with tears, when they found themselves alone in the little parlour, — “ah, if you knew how I have suffered!”

How is it that certain words, and those the homeliest, which the hand writes and the eye reads as trite and commonplace expressions, when *spoken* convey so much, — so many meanings complicated and refined? “Ah, if you knew how I have suffered!”

When the lover heard these words, his gay countenance fell. He drew back; his conscience smote him. In that complaint was the whole history of a clandestine love, not for both the parties, but for the woman, — the painful secrecy, the remorseful deceit, the shame, the fear, the sacrifice. She who uttered those words was scarcely sixteen. It is an early age to leave Childhood behind forever!

“My own love! you have suffered, indeed; but it is over now.”

“Over! And what will they say of me, what will they think of me *at home*? Over! Ah!”

“It is but for a short time. In the course of nature my uncle cannot live long; all then will be explained. Our marriage once made public, all connected with you will be proud to own you. You will have wealth, station, a name among the first in the gentry of England; but above all, you will have the happiness to think that your forbearance for a time has saved me, and it may be our children, sweet one! — from poverty and —”

“It is enough,” interrupted the girl; and the expression of her countenance became serene and elevated. “It is for you,

for your sake. I know what you hazard, how much I must owe you! Forgive me; this is the last murmur you shall ever hear from these lips."

An hour after these words were spoken, the marriage ceremony was concluded.

"Caleb," said the bridegroom, drawing the clergyman aside as they were about to re-enter the house, "you will keep your promise, I know; and you think I may depend implicitly upon the good faith of the witness you have selected?"

"Upon his good faith?—no," said Caleb, smiling; "but upon his deafness, his ignorance, and his age. My poor old clerk! he will have forgotten all about it before this day three months. Now I have seen your lady, I no longer wonder that you incur so great a risk. I never beheld so lovely a countenance. You will be happy!" And the village priest sighed, and thought of the coming winter and his own lonely hearth.

"My dear friend, you have only seen her beauty; it is her least charm. Heaven knows how often I have made love; and this is the only woman I have ever really loved. Caleb, there is an excellent living that adjoins my uncle's house. The rector is old; when the house is mine, you will not be long without the living. We shall be neighbours, Caleb, and then you shall try and find a bride for yourself. Smith,"—and the bridegroom turned to the servant who had accompanied his wife, and served as a second witness to the marriage,— "tell the post-boy to put to the horses immediately."

"Yes, sir. May I speak a word with you?"

"Well, what?"

"Your uncle, sir, sent for me to come to him the day before we left town."

"Aha! indeed!"

"And I could just pick up among his servants that he had some suspicion—at least, that he had been making inquiries—and seemed very cross, sir."

"You went to him?"

"No, sir, I was afraid. He has such a way with him; whenever his eye is fixed on mine, I always feel as if it was

impossible to tell a lie; and—and—in short, I thought it was best not to go.”

“You did right. — Confound this fellow!” muttered the bridegroom, turning away; “he is honest, and loves me: yet if my uncle sees him, he is clumsy enough to betray all. Well, I always meant to get him out of the way, — the sooner the better. — Smith!”

“Yes, sir.”

“You have often said that you should like, if you had some capital, to settle in Australia. Your father is an excellent farmer; you are above the situation you hold with me; you are well educated, and have some knowledge of agriculture; you can scarcely fail to make a fortune as a settler; and if you are of the same mind still, why, look you, I have just £1,000 at my banker’s: you shall have half, if you like to sail by the first packet.”

“Oh, sir, you are too generous.”

“Nonsense! no thanks. I am more prudent than generous, for I agree with you that it is all up with me if my uncle gets hold of you. I dread my prying brother, too. In fact, the obligation is on my side; only stay abroad till I am a rich man, and my marriage made public, and then you may ask of me what you will. It’s agreed, then; order the horses, we’ll go round by Liverpool, and learn about the vessels. By the way, my good fellow, I hope you see nothing now of that good-for-nothing brother of yours?”

“No, indeed, sir. It’s a thousand pities he has turned out so ill; for he was the cleverest of the family, and could always twist me round his little finger.”

“That’s the very reason I mentioned him. If he learned our secret, he would take it to an excellent market. Where is he?”

“Hiding, I suspect, sir.”

“Well, we shall put the sea between you and him! So now all’s safe.”

Caleb stood by the porch of his house as the bride and bridegroom entered their humble vehicle. Though then November, the day was exquisitely mild and calm, the sky

without a cloud, and even the leafless trees seemed to smile beneath the cheerful sun. And the young bride wept no more; she was with him she loved, she was his forever. She forgot the rest. The hope, the heart of sixteen, spoke brightly out through the blushes that mantled over her fair cheeks. The bridegroom's frank and manly countenance was radiant with joy. As he waved his hand to Caleb from the window, the post-boy cracked his whip, the servant settled himself on the dickey, the horses started off in a brisk trot, the clergyman was left alone!

To be married is certainly an event in life: to marry other people is, for a priest, a very ordinary occurrence; and yet from that day a great change began to operate in the spirits and the habits of Caleb Price. Have you ever, my gentle reader, buried yourself for some time quietly in the lazy ease of a dull country life; have you ever become gradually accustomed to its monotony, and inured to its solitude; and just at the time when you have half-forgotten the great world — that *mare magnum* that frets and roars in the distance — have you ever received in your calm retreat some visitor, full of the busy and excited life which you imagined yourself contented to relinquish? If so, have you not perceived, that, in proportion as his presence and communication either revived old memories or brought before you new pictures of “the bright tumult” of that existence of which your guest made a part, you began to compare him curiously with yourself, — you began to feel that what before was to rest is now to rot; that your years are gliding from you unenjoyed and wasted; that the contrast between the animal life of passionate civilization and the vegetable torpor of motionless seclusion is one that, if you are still young, it tasks your philosophy to bear, — feeling all the while that the torpor may be yours to your grave? And when your guest has left you, when you are again alone, is the solitude the same as it was before?

Our poor Caleb had for years rooted his thoughts to his village. His guest had been like the Bird in the Fairy Tale, settling upon the quiet branches, and singing so loudly and so gladly of the enchanted skies afar, that when it flew away the

tree pined, nipped and withering in the sober sun in which before it had basked contented. The guest was, indeed, one of those men whose animal spirits exercise upon such as come within their circle the influence and power usually ascribed only to intellectual qualities. During the month he had sojourned with Caleb, he had brought back to the poor parson all the gayety of the brisk and noisy novitiate that preceded the solemn vow and the dull retreat,—the social parties, the merry suppers, the open-handed, open-hearted fellowship of riotous, delightful, extravagant, thoughtless youth. And Caleb was not a bookman, not a scholar; he had no resources in himself, no occupation but his indolent and ill-paid duties. The emotions, therefore, of the Active Man were easily aroused within him. But if this comparison between his past and present life rendered him restless and disturbed, how much more deeply and lastingly was he affected by a contrast between his own future and that of his friend! Not in those points where he could never hope equality, — wealth and station, the conventional distinctions to which, after all, a man of ordinary sense must sooner or later reconcile himself, — but in that *one* respect wherein all, high and low, pretend to the same rights, — rights which a man of moderate warmth of feeling can never willingly renounce, — namely, a partner in a lot however obscure; a kind face by a hearth, no matter how mean it be! And his happier friend, like all men full of life, was full of himself, — full of his love, of his future, of the blessings of home and wife and children. Then, too, the young bride seemed so fair, so confiding, and so tender; so formed to grace the noblest or to cheer the humblest home! And both were so happy, so all in all to each other, as they left that barren threshold! And the priest felt all this, as, melancholy and envious, he turned from the door in that November day to find himself thoroughly alone. He now began seriously to muse upon those fancied blessings which men wearied with celibacy see springing heavenward behind the altar. A few weeks afterwards a notable change was visible in the good man's exterior. He became more careful of his dress; he shaved every morning;

he purchased a crop-eared Welsh cob; and it was soon known in the neighbourhood that the only journey the cob was ever condemned to take was to the house of a certain squire, who, amidst a family of all ages, boasted two very pretty marriageable daughters. That was the second holiday-time of poor Caleb, — the love-romance of his life: it soon closed. On learning the amount of the pastor's stipend, the squire refused to receive his addresses; and shortly after, the girl to whom he had attached himself made what the world calls a happy match: and perhaps it was one, for I never heard that she regretted the forsaken lover. Probably Caleb was not one of those whose place in a woman's heart is never to be supplied. The lady married, the world went round as before, the brook danced as merrily through the village, the poor worked on the week-days, and the urchins gambolled round the gravestones on the Sabbath, — and the pastor's heart was broken. He languished gradually and silently away. The villagers observed that he had lost his old good-humoured smile; that he did not stop every Saturday evening at the carrier's gate, to ask if there were any news stirring in the town which the carrier weekly visited; that he did not come to borrow the stray newspapers that now and then found their way into the village; that, as he sauntered along the brookside, his clothes hung loose on his limbs, and that he no longer "whistled as he went." Alas, he was no longer "in want of thought!" By degrees, the walks themselves were suspended; the parson was no longer visible: a stranger performed his duties.

One day, it might be some three years and more after the fatal visit I have commemorated, — one very wild rough day in early March, the postman who made the round of the district rang at the parson's bell. The single female servant, her red hair loose on her neck, replied to the call.

"And how is the master?"

"Very bad;" and the girl wiped her eyes.

"He should leave you something handsome," remarked the postman, kindly, as he pocketed the money for the letter.

The pastor was in bed. The boisterous wind rattled down

the chimney and shook the ill-fitting casement in its rotting frame. The clothes he had last worn were thrown carelessly about, unsmoothed, unbrushed; the scanty articles of furniture were out of their proper places: slovenly discomfort marked the death-chamber. And by the bedside stood a neighbouring clergyman, a stout, rustic, homely, thoroughly Welsh priest, who might have sat for the portrait of Parson Adams.

"Here's a letter for you," said the visitor.

"For me!" echoed Caleb, feebly. "Ah — well — is it not very dark, or are my eyes failing?" The clergyman and the servant drew aside the curtains, and propped the sick man up. He read as follows, slowly, and with difficulty: —

DEAR CALEB, — At last I can do something for you. A friend of mine has a living in his gift just vacant, worth, I understand, from three to four hundred a year: pleasant neighbourhood, small parish. And my friend keeps the hounds! — just the thing for you. He is, however, a very particular sort of person, — wants a companion, and has a horror of anything evangelical; wishes, therefore, to see you before he decides. If you can meet me in London some day next month, I'll present you to him, and I have no doubt it will be settled. You must think it strange I never wrote to you since we parted, but you know I never was a very good correspondent; and as I had nothing to communicate advantageous to you, I thought it a sort of insult to enlarge on my own happiness, and so forth. All I shall say on that score is, that I've sown my wild oats; and that you may take my word for it, there's nothing that can make a man know how large the heart is and how little the world, till he comes home (perhaps after a hard day's hunting), and sees his own fireside, and hears one dear welcome; and — oh, by the way, Caleb, if you could but see my boy, the sturdiest little rogue! But enough of this. All that vexes me is, that I've never yet been able to declare my marriage. My uncle, however, suspects nothing; my wife bears up against all, like an angel as she is. Still, in case of any accident, it occurs to me, now I'm writing to you, especially if you leave the place, that it may be as well to send me an examined copy of the register. In those remote places registers are often lost or mislaid; and it may be useful hereafter, when I proclaim the marriage, to clear up all doubt as to the fact.

Good-by, old fellow.

Yours most truly, etc.

"It comes too late," sighed Caleb, heavily; and the letter fell from his hands. There was a long pause. "Close the shutters," said the sick man, at last; "I think I could sleep: and — and — pick up that letter."

With a trembling but eager gripe he seized the paper, as a miser would seize the deeds of an estate on which he has a mortgage. He smoothed the folds, looked complacently at the well known hand, smiled, — a ghastly smile! — and then placed the letter under his pillow, and sank down; they left him alone. He did not wake for some hours, and that good clergyman, poor as himself, was again at his post. The only friendships that are really with us in the hour of need are those which are cemented by equality of circumstance. In the depth of home, in the hour of tribulation, by the bed of death, the rich and the poor are seldom found side by side. Caleb was evidently much feebler; but his sense seemed clearer than it had been, and the instincts of his native kindness were the last that left him. "There is something he wants me to do for him," he muttered. "Ah! I remember: Jones, will you send for the parish register? It is somewhere in the vestry-room, I think, — but nothing's kept properly. Better go yourself; 't is important."

Mr. Jones nodded, and sallied forth. The register was not in the vestry; the churchwardens knew nothing about it; the clerk — a new clerk, who was also the sexton, and rather a wild fellow — had gone ten miles off to a wedding. Every place was searched; till, at last, the book was found, amidst a heap of old magazines and dusty papers, in the parlour of Caleb himself. By the time it was brought to him, the sufferer was fast declining; with some difficulty his dim eye discovered the place where, amidst the clumsy pothooks of the parishioners, the large clear hand of his old friend and the trembling characters of the bride looked forth, distinguished.

"Extract this for me, will you?" said Caleb.

Mr. Jones obeyed.

"Now, just write above the extract:—

"‘SIR, — By Mr. Price’s desire I send you the inclosed. He is too ill to write himself; but he bids me say that he has never been quite the same man since you left him; and that, if he should not get well again, still your kind letter has made him easier in his mind.’"

Caleb stopped.

"Go on."

"That is all I have to say: sign your name, and put the address, — here it is. Ah, the letter," he muttered, "must not lie about! If anything happens to me, it may get him into trouble."

And as Mr. Jones sealed his communication, Caleb feebly stretched his wan hand, held the letter which had "come too late" over the flame of the candle. As the blazing paper dropped on the carpetless floor, Mr. Jones prudently set thereon the broad sole of his top-boot, and the maidservant brushed the tinder into the grate.

"Ah, trample it out; hurry it amongst the ashes, — the last as the rest," said Caleb, hoarsely. "Friendship, fortune, hope, love, life, a little flame, and then — and then —"

"Don't be uneasy — it's quite out!" said Mr. Jones.

Caleb turned his face to the wall. He lingered till the next day, when he passed insensibly from sleep to death. As soon as the breath was out of his body, Mr. Jones felt that his duty was discharged, that other duties called him home. He promised to return to read the burial-service over the deceased, gave some hasty orders about the plain funeral, and was turning from the room, when he saw the letter he had written by Caleb's wish still on the table. "I pass the post-office, I'll put it in," said he to the weeping servant; "and just give me that scrap of paper." So he wrote on the scrap, "P. S. He died this morning at half-past twelve, without pain. — M. J.;" and, not taking the trouble to break the seal, thrust the final bulletin into the folds of the letter, which he then carefully placed in his vest pocket, and safely transferred to the post. And that was all that the jovial and happy man to whom the letter was addressed ever heard of the last days of his college friend.

The living, vacant by the death of Caleb Price, was not so

valuable as to plague the patron with many applications. It continued vacant nearly the whole of the six months prescribed by law; and the desolate parsonage was committed to the charge of one of the villagers, who had occasionally assisted Caleb in the care of his little garden. The villager, his wife, and half-a-dozen noisy, ragged children took possession of the quiet bachelor's abode. The furniture had been sold to pay the expenses of the funeral, and a few trifling bills; and, save the kitchen and the two attics, the empty house, uninhabited, was surrendered to the sportive mischief of the idle urchins, who prowled about the silent chambers, in fear of the silence and in ecstasy at the space. The bedroom in which Caleb had died was, indeed, long held sacred by infantine superstition; but one day the eldest boy having ventured across the threshold, two cupboards, the doors standing ajar, attracted the child's curiosity. He opened one, and his exclamation soon brought the rest of the children round him. Have you ever, reader, when a boy, suddenly stumbled on that El Dorado called by the grown-up folks a lumber-room? Lumber, indeed! what *Virtù* double-locks in cabinets is the real lumber to the boy! Lumber, reader! to thee it was a treasury! Now this cupboard had been the lumber-room in Caleb's household. In an instant the whole troop had thrown themselves on the motley contents. Stray joints of clumsy fishing-rods; artificial baits; a pair of worn-out top-boots, in which one of the urchins, whooping and shouting, buried himself up to the middle; moth-eaten, stained, and ragged, the collegian's gown, — relic of the dead man's palmy time; a bag of carpenter's tools, chiefly broken; a cricket-bat; an odd boxing-glove; a fencing-foil, snapped in the middle; and, more than all, some half-finished attempts at rude toys, — a boat, a cart, a doll's house, — in which the good-natured Caleb had busied himself for the younger ones of that family in which he had found the fatal ideal of his trite life. One by one were these lugged forth from their dusty slumber, profane hands struggling for the first right of appropriation. And now, revealed against the wall, glared upon the startled violaters of the sanctuary, with glassy eyes

and horrent visage, a grim monster. They huddled back one upon the other, pale and breathless, till the eldest, seeing that the creature moved not, took heart, approached on tip-toe, twice receded and twice again advanced, and finally drew out, daubed, painted, and tricked forth in the semblance of a griffin, a gigantic kite.

The children, alas! were not old and wise enough to know all the dormant value of that imprisoned aéronaut, which had cost Caleb many a dull evening's labor, — the intended gift to the false one's favourite brother. But they guessed that it was a thing or spirit appertaining of right to them; and they resolved, after mature consultation, to impart the secret of their discovery to an old wooden-legged villager, who had served in the army, who was the idol of all the children of the place, and who, they firmly believed, knew everything under the sun, except the mystical arts of reading and writing. Accordingly, having seen that the coast was clear, — for they considered their parents (as the children of the hard-working often do) the natural foes to amusement, — they carried the monster into an old outhouse, and ran to the veteran to beg him to come up slyly and inspect its properties.

Three months after this memorable event arrived the new pastor, — a slim, prim, orderly, and starch young man, framed by nature and trained by practice to bear a great deal of solitude and starving. Two loving couples had waited to be married till his Reverence should arrive. The ceremony performed, where was the registry-book? The vestry was searched; the churchwardens interrogated. The gay clerk, who, on the demise of his deaf predecessor, had come into office a little before Caleb's last illness, had a dim recollection of having taken the registry up to Mr. Price at the time the vestry-room was whitewashed. The house was searched; the cupboard, the mysterious cupboard, was explored. "Here it is, sir!" cried the clerk; and he pounced upon a pale parchment volume. The thin clergyman opened it, and recoiled in dismay, — more than three-fourths of the leaves had been torn out.

"It is the moths, sir," said the gardener's wife, who had not yet removed from the house.

The clergyman looked round; one of the children was trembling. "What have you done to this book, little one?"

"That book? — the — hi! — hi! —"

"Speak the truth, and you sha' n't be punished."

"I did not know it was any harm, — hi! — hi! —"

"Well, and —"

"And old Ben helped us."

"Well?"

"And — and — and — hi! — hi! — the tail of the kite, sir! —"

"Where is the kite?"

Alas! the kite and its tail were long ago gone to that undiscovered limbo where all things lost, broken, vanished, and destroyed — things that lose themselves, — for servants are too honest to steal; things that break themselves, — for servants are too careful to break — find an everlasting and impenetrable refuge.

"It does not signify a pin's head," said the clerk; "the parish must find a new 'un!"

"It is no fault of mine," said the pastor. "Are my chops ready?"

CHAPTER II.

AND soothed with idle dreams the frowning fate. — CRABBE.

"WHY does not my father come back? what a time he has been away!"

"My dear Philip, business detains him; but he will be here in a few days, — perhaps to-day!"

"I should like him to see how much I am improved."

"Improved in what, Philip?" said the mother, with a smile; "not Latin, I am sure, for I have not seen you open a book since you insisted on poor Todd's dismissal."

"Todd! Oh, he was such a scrub, and spoke through his nose: what could he know of Latin?"

"More than you ever will, I fear, unless" — and here there was a certain hesitation in the mother's voice, — "unless your father consents to your going to school."

"Well, I should like to go to Eton! That's the only school for a gentleman. I've heard my father say so."

"Philip, you are too proud."

"Proud! you often call me proud; but, then, you kiss me when you do so. Kiss me now, Mother."

The lady drew her son to her breast, put aside the clustering hair from his forehead, and kissed him; but the kiss was sad, and the moment after she pushed him away gently and muttered, unconscious that she was overheard, —

"If, after all, my devotion to the father should wrong the children!"

The boy started, and a cloud passed over his brow; but he said nothing. A light step entered the room through the French casements that opened on the lawn, and the mother turned to her youngest-born, and her eye brightened.

"Mamma! Mamma! here is a letter for you. I snatched it from John: it is Papa's handwriting."

The lady uttered a joyous exclamation, and seized the letter. The younger child nestled himself on a stool at her feet, looking up while she read it; the elder stood apart, leaning on his gun, and with something of thought, even of gloom, upon his countenance.

There was a strong contrast in the two boys. The elder, who was about fifteen, seemed older than he was, not only from his height, but from the darkness of his complexion, and a certain proud, nay, imperious, expression upon features that without having the soft and fluent graces of childhood were yet regular and striking. His dark-green shooting-dress, with the belt and pouch, the cap, with its gold tassel set upon his luxuriant curls, which had the purple gloss of the raven's plume, blended perhaps something prematurely manly in his own tastes with the love of the fantastic and the picturesque which bespeaks the presiding genius of the proud

mother. The younger son had scarcely told his ninth year, and the soft, auburn ringlets, descending half-way down the shoulders; the rich and delicate bloom that exhibits at once the hardy health and the gentle fostering; the large deep blue eyes; the flexile and almost effeminate contour of the harmonious features, —altogether made such an ideal of child-like beauty as Lawrence had loved to paint or Chantrey model. And the daintiest cares of a mother, who, as yet, has her darling all to herself —her toy, her plaything — were visible in the large falling collar of finest cambric, and the blue velvet dress with its filagree buttons and embroidered sash.

Both the boys had about them the air of those whom Fate ushers blandly into life, —the air of wealth, and birth, and luxury, spoiled and pampered as if earth had no thorn for their feet and heaven not a wind to visit their young cheeks too roughly. The mother had been extremely handsome; and though the first bloom of youth was now gone, she had still the beauty that might captivate new love, —an easier task than to retain the old. Both her sons, though differing from each other, resembled her: she had the *features* of the younger; and probably any one who had seen her in her own earlier youth would have recognized in that child's gay yet gentle countenance the mirror of the mother when a girl. Now, however, especially when silent or thoughtful, the *expression* of her face was rather that of the elder boy; the cheek once so rosy was now pale, though clear, with something which time had given of pride and thought in the curved lip and the high forehead. One who could have looked on her in her more lonely hours might have seen that the pride had known shame and the thought was the shadow of the passions of fear and sorrow.

But now as she read those hasty, brief, but well-remembered characters, — read as one whose heart was in her eyes, — joy and triumph alone were visible in that eloquent countenance. Her eyes flashed, her breast heaved; and at length, clasping the letter to her lips, she kissed it again and again with passionate transport. Then, as her eyes met the dark, inquir-

ing, earnest gaze of her eldest born, she flung her arms round him, and wept vehemently.

"What is the matter, Mamma, dear Mamma?" said the youngest, pushing himself between Philip and his mother.

"Your father is coming back, this day, this very hour; and you—you—child—you, Philip—" Here sobs broke in upon her words, and left her speechless.

The letter that had produced this effect ran as follows:—

To MRS. MORTON, Fernside Cottage.

DEAREST KATE, — My last letter prepared you for the news I have now to relate, — my poor uncle is no more. Though I had seen little of him, especially of late years, his death sensibly affected me; but I have at least the consolation of thinking that there is nothing now to prevent my doing justice to you. I am the sole heir to his fortune. I have it in my power, dearest Kate, to offer you a tardy recompense for all you have put up with for my sake, — a sacred testimony to your long forbearance, your unreproachful love, your wrongs, and your devotion. Our children, too — my noble Philip! — kiss them, Kate — kiss them for me a thousand times.

I write in great haste; the burial is just over, and my letter will only serve to announce my return. My darling Catherine, I shall be with you almost as soon as these lines meet your eyes, — those dear eyes, that for all the tears they have shed for my faults and follies have never looked the less kind.

Yours, ever as ever,

PHILIP BEAUFORT.

This letter has told its tale, and little remains to explain. Philip Beaufort was one of those men of whom there are many in his peculiar class of society, — easy, thoughtless, good-humoured, generous, with feelings infinitely better than his principles.

Inheriting himself but a moderate fortune, which was three parts in the hands of the Jews before he was twenty-five, he had the most brilliant expectations from his uncle, — an old bachelor, who from a courtier had turned a misanthrope, cold, shrewd, penetrating, worldly, sarcastic, and imperious; and from this relation he received, meanwhile, a handsome, and, indeed, munificent allowance. About sixteen years before

the date at which this narrative opens, Philip Beaufort had "run off," as the saying is, with Catherine Morton, then little more than a child, — a motherless child, — educated at a boarding-school to notions and desires far beyond her station, — for she was the daughter of a provincial tradesman; and Philip Beaufort, in the prime of life, was possessed of most of the qualities that dazzle the eyes and many of the arts that betray the affections. It was suspected by some that they were privately married: if so, the secret had been closely kept, and baffled all the inquiries of the stern old uncle. Still there was much, not only in the manner, at once modest and dignified, but in the character of Catherine, which was proud and high-spirited, to give colour to the suspicion. Beaufort, a man naturally careless of forms, paid her a marked and punctilious respect; and his attachment was evidently one not only of passion but of confidence and esteem. Time developed in her mental qualities far superior to those of Beaufort, and for these she had ample leisure of cultivation. To the influence derived from her mind and person she added that of a frank, affectionate, and winning disposition; their children cemented the bond between them. Mr. Beaufort was passionately attached to field sports. He lived the greater part of the year with Catherine at the beautiful cottage to which he had built hunting stables that were the admiration of the county; and though the cottage was near London, the pleasures of the metropolis seldom allured him for more than a few days — generally but a few hours — at a time, and he always hurried back with renewed relish to what he considered his home.

Whatever the connection between Catherine and himself (and of the *true* nature of that connection the Introductory Chapter has made the reader more enlightened than the world), her influence had at least weaned from all excesses and many follies a man who, before he knew her, had seemed likely from the extreme joviality and carelessness of his nature and a very imperfect education to contract whatever vices were most in fashion as preservatives against *ennui*. And if their union had been openly hallowed by the Church, Philip Beaufort had been universally esteemed the model of a

tender husband and a fond father. Ever, as he became more and more acquainted with Catherine's natural good qualities and more and more attached to his home, had Mr. Beaufort, with the generosity of true affection, desired to remove from her the pain of an equivocal condition by a public marriage. But Mr. Beaufort, though generous, was not free from the worldliness which had met him everywhere amidst the society in which his youth had been spent. His uncle, the head of one of those families which yearly vanish from the commonalty into the peerage, but which once formed a distinguished peculiarity in the aristocracy of England, — families of ancient birth, immense possessions, at once noble and untitled, — held his estates by no other tenure than his own caprice. Though he professed to like Philip, yet he saw but little of him. When the news of the illicit connection his nephew was reported to have formed reached him, he at first resolved to break it off; but observing that Philip no longer gambled nor ran in debt, and had retired from the turf to the safer and more economical pastimes of the field, he contented himself with inquiries which satisfied him that Philip was not married; and perhaps he thought it, on the whole, more prudent to wink at an error that was not attended by the bills which had heretofore characterized the human infirmities of his reckless nephew. He took care, however, incidentally, and in reference to some scandal of the day, to pronounce his opinion, not upon the fault but upon the only mode of repairing it.

"If ever," said he, and he looked grimly at Philip while he spoke, "a gentleman were to disgrace his ancestry by introducing into his family one whom his own sister could not receive at her house, why, he ought to sink to her level, and wealth would but make his disgrace the more notorious. If I had an only son, and that son were booby enough to do anything so discreditable as to marry beneath him, I would rather have my footman for my successor. You understand, Phil!"

Philip did understand, and looked round at the noble house and the stately park, and his generosity was not equal to the trial. Catherine — so great was her power over him — might perhaps have easily triumphed over his more selfish calcula-

tions; but her love was too delicate ever to breathe of itself the hope that lay deepest at her heart. And her children! — ah! for them she pined, but for them she also hoped. Before them was a long future, and she had all confidence in Philip. Of late, there had been considerable doubts how far the elder Beaufort would realize the expectations in which his nephew had been reared. Philip's younger brother had been much with the old gentleman, and appeared to be in high favour: this brother was a man in every respect the opposite to Philip — sober, supple, decorous, ambitious, with a face of smiles and a heart of ice.

But the old gentleman was taken dangerously ill, and Philip was summoned to his bed of death. Robert, the younger brother, was there also, with his wife (for he had married prudently) and his children, — he had two, a son and a daughter. Not a word did the uncle say as to the disposition of his property till an hour before he died. And then, turning in his bed, he looked first at one nephew, then at the other, and faltered out, —

“Philip, you are a scapegrace, but a gentleman! Robert, you are a careful, sober, plausible man, and it is a great pity you were not in business; you would have made a fortune! — you won't inherit one, though you think it: I have marked you, sir. Philip, beware of your brother. Now, let me see the parson.”

The old man died; the will was read; and Philip succeeded to a rental of £20,000 a year; Robert, to a diamond ring, a gold repeater, £5,000, and a curious collection of bottled snakes.

CHAPTER III.

STAY, delightful Dream;
Let him within his pleasant garden walk;
Give him her arm — of blessings let them talk. — CRABBE.

"THERE, Robert, there! now you can see the new stables. By Jove, they are the completest thing in the three kingdoms!"

"Quite a pile! But is that the house? You lodge your horses more magnificently than yourself."

"But is it not a beautiful cottage? — to be sure, it owes everything to Catherine's taste. Dear Catherine!"

Mr. Robert Beaufort — for this colloquy took place between the brothers, as their *britska* rapidly descended the hill at the foot of which lay Fernside Cottage and its miniature demesnes — Mr. Robert Beaufort pulled his travelling-cap over his brows, and his countenance fell, whether at the name of Catherine, or the tone in which the name was uttered; and there was a pause, broken by a third occupant of the *britska*, a youth of about seventeen, who sat opposite the brothers.

"And who are those boys on the lawn, uncle?"

"Who are those boys?" It was a simple question, but it grated on the ear of Mr. Robert Beaufort; it struck discord at his heart. "Who were those boys?" as they ran across the sward, eager to welcome their father home, — the western sun shining full on their joyous faces, their young forms so lithe and so graceful, their merry laughter ringing in the still air. "Those boys," thought Mr. Robert Beaufort, "the sons of shame, rob mine of his inheritance." The elder brother turned round at his nephew's question, and saw the expression on Robert's face. He bit his lip, and answered gravely, —

"Arthur, they are my children."

"I did not know you were married," replied Arthur, bending forward to take a better view of his cousins.

Mr. Robert Beaufort smiled bitterly, and Philip's brow grew crimson.

The carriage stopped at the little lodge. Philip opened the door, and jumped to the ground; the brother and his son followed. A moment more, and Philip was locked in Catherine's arms, her tears falling fast upon his breast, his children plucking at his coat; and the younger one crying, in his shrill impatient treble, "Papa! Papa! you don't see Sidney, Papa!"

Mr. Robert Beaufort placed his hand on his son's shoulder, and arrested his steps, as they contemplated the group before them.

"Arthur," said he, in a hollow whisper, "those children are our disgrace and your supplanters; they are bastards! bastards! and they are to be his heirs!"

Arthur made no answer, but the smile with which he had hitherto gazed on his new relations vanished.

"Kate," said Mr. Beaufort, as he turned from Mrs. Morton, and lifted his youngest-born in his arms, "this is my brother and his son: they are welcome, are they not?"

Mr. Robert bowed low, and extended his hand, with stiff affability, to Mrs. Morton, muttering something equally complimentary and inaudible.

The party proceeded towards the house. Philip and Arthur brought up the rear.

"Do you shoot?" asked Arthur, observing the gun in his cousin's hand.

"Yes. I hope this season to bag as many head as my father: he is a famous shot. But this is only a single barrel, and an old-fashioned sort of detonator. My father must get me one of the new guns. I can't afford it myself."

"I should think not," said Arthur, smiling.

"Oh, as to that," resumed Philip, quickly, and with a heightened colour, "I *could* have managed it very well if I had not given thirty guineas for a brace of pointers the other day: they are the best dogs you ever saw."

"Thirty guineas!" echoed Arthur, looking with naïve surprise at the speaker; "why, how old are you?"

"Just fifteen last birthday. Holla, John! John Green!" cried the young gentleman in an imperious voice, to one of the gardeners, who was crossing the lawn, "see that the nets are taken down to the lake to-morrow, and that my tent is pitched properly by the lime-trees by nine o'clock. I hope you will understand me this time: Heaven knows you take a deal of telling before you understand anything!"

"Yes, Mr. Philip," said the man, bowing obsequiously; and then muttered, as he went off, "Drat the nat'rel! he speaks to a poor man as if he warn't flesh and blood."

"Does your father keep hunters?" asked Philip.

"No."

"Why?"

"Perhaps one reason may be that he is not rich enough."

"Oh, that's a pity! Never mind, we'll mount you, whenever you like to pay us a visit."

Young Arthur drew himself up, and his air, naturally frank and gentle, became haughty and reserved. Philip gazed on him, and felt offended; he scarce knew why, but from that moment he conceived a dislike to his cousin.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR a man is helpless and vain, of a condition so exposed to calamity that a raisin is able to kill him; any trooper out of the Egyptian army, a fly can do it, when it goes on God's errand. — JEREMY TAYLOR: *On the Deceitfulness of the Heart*.

THE two brothers sat at their wine after dinner. Robert sipped claret, the sturdy Philip quaffed his more generous port. Catherine and the boys might be seen at a little distance, and by the light of a soft August moon, among the shrubs and *bosquets* of the lawn.

Philip Beaufort was about five-and-forty, tall, robust, nay, of great strength of frame and limb; with a countenance

extremely winning, not only from the comeliness of its features, but its frankness, manliness, and good nature. His was the bronzed, rich complexion, the inclination towards *embon-point*, the athletic girth of chest, which denote redundant health and mirthful temper and sanguine blood. Robert, who had lived the life of cities, was a year younger than his brother; nearly as tall, but pale, meagre, stooping, and with a careworn, anxious, hungry look, which made the smile that hung upon his lips seem hollow and artificial. His dress, though plain, was neat and studied; his manner, bland and plausible; his voice, sweet and low. There was that about him which, if it did not win liking, tended to excite respect, — a certain decorum, a nameless propriety of appearance and bearing, that approached a little to formality; his every movement, slow and measured, was that of one who paced in the circle that fences round the habits and usages of the world.

"Yes," said Philip, "I had always decided to take this step, whenever my poor uncle's death should allow me to do so. You have seen Catherine, but you do not know half her good qualities: she would grace any station; and, besides, she nursed me so carefully last year, when I broke my collar-bone in that cursed steeple-chase. Egad, I am getting too heavy and growing too old for such schoolboy pranks."

"I have no doubt of Mrs. Morton's excellence, and I honour your motives; still, when you talk of her gracing any station, you must not forget, my dear brother, that she will be no more received as Mrs. Beaufort than she is now as Mrs. Morton."

"But I tell you, Robert, that I am really married to her already; that she would never have left her home but on that condition; that we were married the very day we met after her flight."

Robert's thin lips broke into a slight sneer of incredulity.

"My dear brother, you do right to say this, — any man in your situation would say the same; but I know that my uncle took every pains to ascertain if the report of a private marriage were true."

"And you helped him in the search. Eh, Bob?"

Bob slightly blushed. Philip went on.

"Ha, ha! to be sure you did; you knew that such a discovery would have done for me in the old gentleman's good opinion. But I blinded you both, ha, ha! The fact is that we were married with the greatest privacy; that even now, I own, it would be difficult for Catherine herself to establish the fact, unless I wished it. I am ashamed to think that I have never even told her where I keep the main proof of the marriage. I induced one witness to leave the country; the other must be long since dead; my poor friend, too, who officiated, is no more. Even the register, Bob, the register itself, has been destroyed; and yet, notwithstanding, I will prove the ceremony and clear up poor Catherine's fame, for I have the attested copy of the register safe and sound. Catherine not married! why, look at her, man!"

Mr. Robert Beaufort glanced at the window for a moment, but his countenance was still that of one unconvinced.

"Well, brother," said he, dipping his fingers in the water-glass, "it is not for me to contradict you. It is a very curious tale, — parson dead, witnesses missing. But still, as I said before, if you are resolved on a public marriage, you are wise to insist that there has been a previous private one. Yet, believe me, Philip," continued Robert, with solemn earnestness, "the world —"

"D—— the world! What do I care for the world? We don't want to go to routs and balls, and give dinners to fine people. I shall live much the same as I have always done; only, I shall now keep the hounds, — they are very indifferently kept at present, — and have a yacht; and engage the best masters for the boys. Phil wants to go to Eton, but I know what Eton is. Poor fellow! his feelings might be hurt there, if others are as sceptical as yourself. I suppose my old friends will not be less civil now I have £20,000 a year; and as for the society of women, between you and me, I don't care a rush for any woman but Catherine, — poor Katty!"

"Well, you are the best judge of your own affairs. You don't misinterpret my motives?"

"My dear Bob, no. I am quite sensible how kind it is in you, — a man of your starch habits and strict views, — com-

ing here to pay a mark of respect to Kate [Mr. Robert turned uneasily in his chair] even before you knew of the private marriage; and I'm sure I don't blame you for never having done it before. You did quite right to try your chance with my uncle."

Mr. Robert turned in his chair again, still more uneasily, and cleared his voice as if to speak. But Philip tossed off his wine, and proceeded, without heeding his brother, —

"And though the poor old man does not seem to have liked you the better for consulting his scruples, yet we must make up for the partiality of his will. Let me see—what with your wife's fortune, you muster £2,000 a year?"

"Only £1,500, Philip, and Arthur's education is growing expensive. Next year he goes to college. He is certainly very clever, and I have great hopes —"

"That he will do honour to us all—so have I. He is a noble young fellow, and I think my Philip may find a great deal to learn from him. Phil is a sad, idle dog, but with a devil of a spirit, and sharp as a needle. I wish you could see him ride. Well, to return to Arthur. Don't trouble yourself about his education, — that shall be my care. He shall go to Christ Church, — a gentleman-commoner, of course; and when he is of age we'll get him into Parliament. Now for yourself, Bob. I shall sell the town-house in Berkeley Square, and whatever it brings you shall have. Besides that, I'll add £1,500 a year to your £1,500, — so that's said and done. Pshaw! brothers should be brothers. Let's come out and play with the boys!"

The two Beauforts stepped through the open casement into the lawn.

"You look pale, Bob, — all you London fellows do. As for me, I feel as strong as a horse; much better than when I was one of your gay dogs straying loose about the town! 'Gad! I have never had a moment's ill health, except from a fall now and then. I feel as if I should live forever, and that's the reason why I could never make a will."

"Have you never, then, made your will?"

"Never as yet. Faith, till now I had little enough to leave;

but now that all this great Beaufort property is at my own disposal, I must think of Kate's jointure. By Jove! now I speak of it, I will ride to — to-morrow, and consult the lawyer there both about the will and the marriage. You will stay for the wedding?"

"Why, I *must* go into —shire to-morrow evening, to place Arthur with his tutor. But I'll return for the wedding, if you particularly wish it; only Mrs. Beaufort is a woman of very strict —"

"I *do* particularly wish it," interrupted Philip, gravely; "for I desire, for Catherine's sake, that you, my sole surviving relation, may not seem to withhold your countenance from an act of justice to her. And as for your wife, I fancy £1,500 a year would reconcile her to my marrying out of the Penitentiary."

Mr. Robert bowed his head, coughed huskily, and said, "I appreciate your generous affection, Philip."

The next morning, while the elder parties were still over the breakfast-table, the young people were in the grounds. It was a lovely day, one of the last of the luxuriant August, and Arthur, as he looked round, thought he had never seen a more beautiful place. It was, indeed, just the spot to captivate a youthful and susceptible fancy. The village of Fernside, though in one of the counties adjoining Middlesex, and as near to London as the owner's passionate pursuits of the field would permit, was yet as rural and sequestered as if a hundred miles distant from the smoke of the huge city. Though the dwelling was called a cottage, Philip had enlarged the original modest building into a villa of some pretensions. On either side a graceful and well-proportioned portico stretched verandas, covered with roses and clematis; to the right extended a range of costly conservatories, terminating in vistas of trellis-work which formed those elegant alleys called rosaries, and served to screen the more useful gardens from view. The lawn, smooth and even, was studded with American plants and shrubs in flower, and bounded on one side by a small lake, on the opposite bank of which limes and cedars threw their shadows over the clear waves; on the other side a light fence

separated the grounds from a large paddock, in which three or four hunters grazed in indolent enjoyment. It was one of those cottages which bespeak the ease and luxury not often found in more ostentatious mansions, — an abode which at sixteen the visitor contemplates with vague notions of poetry and love; which at forty he might think dull and d—d expensive; which at sixty he would pronounce to be damp in winter and full of earwigs in the summer. Master Philip was leaning on his gun; Master Sidney was chasing a peacock butterfly; Arthur was silently gazing on the shining lake and the still foliage that drooped over its surface. In the countenance of this young man there was something that excited a certain interest. He was less handsome than Philip, but the expression of his face was more prepossessing. There was something of pride in the forehead, but of good nature, not unmixed with irresolution and weakness, in the curves of the mouth. He was more delicate of frame than Philip, and the colour of his complexion was not that of a robust constitution. His movements were graceful and self-possessed, and he had his father's sweetness of voice.

"This is really beautiful! I envy you, cousin Philip."

"Has not your father got a country-house?"

"No; we live either in London or at some hot, crowded watering-place."

"Yes; this is very nice during the shooting and hunting season. But my old nurse says we shall have a much finer place now. I liked this very well till I saw Lord Belville's place; but it is very unpleasant not to have the finest house in the county. *Aut Caesar aut nullus*, — that's my motto. Ah! do you see that swallow? I'll bet you a guinea I hit it."

"No, poor thing! don't hurt it." But ere the remonstrance was uttered, the bird lay quivering on the ground.

"It is just September, and one must keep one's hand in," said Philip, as he reloaded his gun.

To Arthur this action seemed a wanton cruelty. It was rather the wanton recklessness which belongs to a wild boy accustomed to gratify the impulse of the moment, — the recklessness which is *not* cruelty in the boy, but which prosperity

may pamper into cruelty in the man. And scarce had he reloaded his gun before the neigh of a young colt came from the neighbouring paddock, and Philip bounded to the fence. "He calls me, poor fellow; you shall see him feed from my hand. Run in for a piece of bread, — a large piece, Sidney."

The boy and the animal seemed to understand each other. "I see you don't like horses," he said to Arthur. "As for me, I love dogs, horses, — every dumb creature."

"Except swallows!" said Arthur, with a half smile, and a little surprised at the inconsistency of the boast.

"Oh! that is *sport*, — all fair. It is not to hurt the swallow, — it is to obtain skill," said Philip, colouring; and then, as if not quite easy with his own definition, he turned away abruptly.

"This is dull work; suppose we fish. By Jove!" (he had caught his father's expletive) "that blockhead has put the tent on the wrong side of the lake, after all. Holla, you, sir!" and the unhappy gardener looked up from his flower-beds, "what ails you? I have a great mind to tell my father of you, — you grow stupider every day. I told you to put the tent under the lime-trees."

"We could not manage it, sir; the boughs were in the way."

"And why did you not cut the boughs, blockhead?"

"I did not dare do so, sir, without master's orders," said the man, doggedly.

"My orders are sufficient, I should think; so none of your impertinence," cried Philip, with a raised colour; and lifting his hand, in which he held his ramrod, he shook it menacingly over the gardener's head. "I've a great mind to —"

"What's the matter, Philip?" cried the good-humoured voice of his father. "Fie!"

"This fellow does not mind what I say, sir."

"I did not like to cut the boughs of the lime-trees without your orders, sir," said the gardener.

"No, it would be a pity to cut them. You should consult me there, Master Philip;" and the father shook him by the collar with a good-natured, and affectionate, but rough sort of caress.

"Be quiet, Father!" said the boy, petulantly and proudly; "or," he added, in a lower voice, but one which showed emotion, "my cousin may think you mean less kindly than you always do, sir."

The father was touched. "Go and cut the lime-boughs, John; and always do as Mr. Philip tells you."

The mother was behind, and she sighed audibly. "Ah! dearest, I fear you will spoil him."

"Is he not your son; and do we not owe him the more respect for having hitherto allowed others to —"

He stopped, and the mother could say no more. And thus it was that this boy of powerful character and strong passions had, from motives the most amiable, been pampered from the darling into the despot.

"And now, Kate, I will, as I told you last night, ride over to — and fix the earliest day for our public marriage. I will ask the lawyer to dine here, to talk about the proper steps for proving the private one."

"Will that be difficult?" asked Catherine, with natural anxiety.

"No, — for if you remember, I had the precaution to get an examined copy of the register; otherwise, I own to you, I should have been alarmed. I don't know what has become of Smith. I heard some time since from his father that he had left the colony; and (I never told you before, — it would have made you uneasy) once, a few years ago, when my uncle again got it into his head that we might be married, I was afraid poor Caleb's successor might by chance betray us. So I went over to A — myself, being near it when I was staying with Lord C —, in order to see how far it might be necessary to secure the parson; and, only think! I found an accident had happened to the register. So as the clergyman could know nothing, I kept my own counsel. How lucky I have the copy! No doubt the lawyer will set all to rights; and while I am making the settlements, I may as well make my will. I have plenty for both boys, but the dark one must be the heir. Does he not look born to be an eldest son?"

"Ah, Philip!"

"Pshaw! one don't die the sooner for making a will. Have I the air of a man in a consumption?" and the sturdy sportsman glanced complacently at the strength and symmetry of his manly limbs. "Come, Phil, let's go to the stables. Now, Robert, I will show you what is better worth seeing than those miserable flower-beds." So saying, Mr. Beaufort led the way to the courtyard at the back of the cottage. Catherine and Sidney remained on the lawn; the rest followed the host. The grooms, of whom Beaufort was the idol, hastened to show how well the horses had thriven in his absence.

"Do see how Brown Bess has come on, sir! but, to be sure, Master Philip keeps her in exercise. Ah, sir, he will be as good a rider as your honour, one of these days."

"He ought to be a better, Tom; for I think he'll never have my weight to carry. Well, saddle Brown Bess for Mr. Philip. What horse shall I take? Ah! here's my old friend, Puppet!"

"I don't know what's come to Puppet, sir; he's off his feed, and turned sulky. I tried him over the bar yesterday; but he was quite restive like."

"The devil he was! So, so, old boy, you shall go over the six-barred gate to-day, or we'll know why;" and Mr. Beaufort patted the sleek neck of his favourite hunter. "Put the saddle on him, Tom."

"Yes, your honour. I sometimes think he is hurt in the loins somehow, — he don't take to his leaps kindly, and he always tries to bite when we bridles him. Be quiet, sir!"

"Only his airs," said Philip. "I did not know this, or I would have taken him over the gate. Why did not you tell me, Tom?"

"Lord love you, sir! because you have such a spurret; and if anything had come to you —"

"Quite right; you are not weight enough for Puppet, my boy, and he never did like any one to back him but myself. What say you, brother, will you ride with us?"

"No, I must go to — to-day with Arthur. I have engaged the post-horses at two o'clock; but I shall be with

you to-morrow or the day after. You see his tutor expects him; and as he is backward in his mathematics, he has no time to lose."

"Well, then, good-by, nephew!" and Beaufort slipped a pocketbook into the boy's hand. "Tush! whenever you want money, don't trouble your father, — write to me. We shall be always glad to see you; and you must teach Philip to like his book a little better, — eh, Phil?"

"No, Father; *I* shall be rich enough to do without books," said Philip, rather coarsely; but then observing the heightened colour of his cousin, he went up to him, and with a generous impulse said, "Arthur, you admired this gun; pray accept it. Nay, don't be shy, — I can have as many as I like for the asking; you're not so well off, you know."

The intention was kind, but the manner was so patronizing that Arthur felt offended. He put back the gun, and said dryly, "I shall have no occasion for the gun, thank you."

If Arthur was offended by the offer, Philip was much more offended by the refusal. "As you like; I hate pride," said he; and he gave the gun to the groom as he vaulted into his saddle with the lightness of a young Mercury. "Come, Father!"

Mr. Beaufort had now mounted his favourite hunter, — a large, powerful horse well known for its prowess in the field. The rider trotted him once or twice through the spacious yard.

"Nonsense, Tom; no more hurt in the loins than I am. Open that gate; we will go across the paddock, and take the gate yonder, — the old six-bar, — eh, Phil?"

"Capital! — to be sure!"

The gate was opened. The grooms stood watchful to see the leap, and a kindred curiosity arrested Robert Beaufort and his son.

How well they looked, — those two horsemen! the ease, lightness, spirit of the one, with the fine-limbed and fiery steed that literally "bounded beneath him as a barb," — seemingly as gay as ardent, and as haughty as the boy-rider; and the manly and almost herculean form of the elder Beaufort, which, from the buoyancy of its movements and the

supple grace that belongs to the perfect mastership of any athletic art, possessed an elegance and dignity, especially on horseback, which rarely accompanies proportions equally sturdy and robust. There was indeed something knightly and chivalrous in the bearing of the elder Beaufort, — in his handsome aquiline features, the erectness of his mien, the very wave of his hand, as he spurred from the yard.

"What a fine-looking fellow my uncle is!" said Arthur, with involuntary admiration.

"Ay, an excellent life, — amazingly strong!" returned the pale father, with a slight sigh.

"Philip," said Mr. Beaufort, as they cantered across the paddock, "I think the gate is too much for you. I will just take Puppet over, and then we will open it for you."

"Pooh, my dear father! you don't know how I'm improved!"

And slackening the rein, and touching the side of his horse, the young rider darted forward and cleared the gate, which was of no common height, with an ease that extorted a loud "bravo" from the proud father.

"Now, Puppet," said Mr. Beaufort, spurring his own horse. The animal cantered towards the gate, and then suddenly turned round with an impatient and angry snort. "For shame, Puppet! for shame, old boy!" said the sportsman, wheeling him again to the barrier. The horse shook his head, as if in remonstrance; but the spur vigorously applied showed him that his master would not listen to his mute reasonings. He bounded forward, made at the gate, struck his hoofs against the top bar, fell forward, and threw his rider head foremost on the road beyond. The horse rose instantly; not so the master. The son dismounted, alarmed and terrified. His father was speechless! and blood gushed from the mouth and nostrils, as the head drooped heavily on the boy's breast. The bystanders had witnessed the fall. They crowded to the spot; they took the fallen man from the weak arms of the son; the head groom examined him with the eye of one who had picked up science from his experience in such casualties.

"Speak, brother! where are you hurt?" exclaimed Robert Beaufort.

"He will never speak more!" said the groom, bursting into tears. "His neck is broken!"

"Send for the nearest surgeon," cried Mr. Robert. "Good God! boy! don't mount that devilish horse!"

But Arthur had already leaped on the unhappy steed, which had been the cause of this appalling affliction. "Which way?"

"Straight on to —, only two miles, — every one knows Mr. Powis's house. God bless you!" said the groom.

Arthur vanished.

"Lift him carefully, and take him to the house," said Mr. Robert. "My poor brother! my dear brother!"

He was interrupted by a cry, a single, shrill, heart-breaking cry; and Philip fell senseless to the ground.

No one heeded him at that hour; no one heeded the fatherless BASTARD. "Gently, gently," said Mr. Robert, as he followed the servants and their load; and he then muttered to himself, and his sallow cheek grew bright, and his breath came short, "He has made no will! he never made a will."

CHAPTER V.

Constance. O boy, then where art thou?

. . . What becomes of me? — *King John.*

It was three days after the death of Philip Beaufort, — for the surgeon arrived only to confirm the judgment of the groom. In the drawing-room of the cottage, the windows closed, lay the body, in its coffin, the lid not yet nailed down. There, prostrate on the floor, tearless, speechless, was the miserable Catherine; poor Sidney, too young to comprehend all his loss, sobbing at her side; while Philip

apart, seated beside the coffin, gazed abstractedly on that cold rigid face, which had never known one frown for his boyish follies.

In another room, that had been appropriated to the late owner, called his study, sat Robert Beaufort. Everything in this room spoke of the deceased. Partially separated from the rest of the house, it communicated by a winding staircase with a chamber above, to which Philip had been wont to betake himself whenever he returned late and over-exhilarated from some rural feast crowning a hard day's hunt. Above a quaint, old-fashioned bureau of Dutch workmanship (which Philip had picked up at a sale in the earlier years of his marriage) was a portrait of Catherine taken in the bloom of her youth. On a peg on the door that led to the staircase, still hung his rough driving coat. The window commanded the view of the paddock in which the worn-out hunter or the unbroken colt grazed at will. Around the walls of the "study" — a strange misnomer! — hung prints of celebrated fox-hunts and renowned steeple-chases; guns, fishing-rods, and foxes' brushes, ranged with a sportsman's neatness, supplied the place of books. On the mantelpiece lay a cigar-case, a well-worn volume on the Veterinary Art, and the last number of the "Sporting Magazine." And in the room thus witnessing of the hardy, masculine, rural life that had passed away, sallow, stooping, town-worn, sat, I say, Robert Beaufort, the heir-at-law, — alone; for the very day of the death he had remanded his son home with the letter that announced to his wife the change in their fortunes, and directed her to send his lawyer post-haste to the house of death. The bureau and the drawers and the boxes which contained the papers of the deceased were open; their contents had been ransacked; no certificate of the private marriage, no hint of such an event, — not a paper found to signify the last wishes of the rich dead man.

He had died, and made no sign. Mr. Robert Beaufort's countenance was still and composed.

A knock at the door was heard; the lawyer entered.

"Sir, the undertakers are here, and Mr. Greaves has ordered

the bells to be rung. At three o'clock he will read the service."

"I am obliged to you, Blackwell, for taking these melancholy offices on yourself. My poor brother! it is so sudden! But the funeral, you say, ought to take place to-day?"

"The weather is so warm," said the lawyer, wiping his forehead. As he spoke, the death-bell was heard.

There was a pause.

"It would have been a terrible shock to Mrs. Morton if she had been his wife," observed Mr. Blackwell; "but I suppose persons of that kind have very little feeling. I must say that it was fortunate for the family that the event happened before Mr. Beaufort was wheedled into so improper a marriage."

"It *was* fortunate, Blackwell. Have you ordered the post-horses? I shall start immediately after the funeral."

"What is to be done with the cottage, sir?"

"You may advertise it for sale."

"And Mrs. Morton and the boys?"

"Hum! we will consider. She was a tradesman's daughter. I think I ought to provide for her suitably, eh?"

"It is more than the world could expect from you, sir; it is very different from a wife."

"Oh, very! very much so, indeed! Just ring for a lighted candle, we will seal up these boxes. And—I think I could take a sandwich. Poor Philip!"

The funeral was over, the dead shovelled away. What a strange thing it does seem, that that very form which we prized so charily, for which we prayed the winds to be gentle, which we lapped from the cold in our arms, from whose footstep we would have removed a stone, should be suddenly thrust out of sight, — an abomination that the earth must not look upon, — a despicable loathsomeness, to be concealed and to be forgotten! And this same composition of bone and muscle that was yesterday so strong, which men respected and women loved and children clung to, to-day so lamentably powerless, unable to defend or protect those who lay nearest to its heart; its riches wrested from it, its wishes spat upon, its influence

expiring with its last sigh! A breath from its lips making all that mighty difference between what it was and what it is!

The post-horses were at the door as the funeral procession returned to the house.

Mr. Robert Beaufort bowed slightly to Mrs. Morton, and said, with his pocket-handkerchief still before his eyes, —

“I will write to you in a few days, ma’am; you will find that I shall not forget you. The cottage will be sold; but we sha’n’t hurry you. Good-by, ma’am; good-by, my boys;” and he patted his nephews on the head.

Philip winced aside, and scowled haughtily at his uncle, who muttered to himself, “That boy will come to no good!” Little Sidney put his hand into the rich man’s, and looked up pleadingly into his face. “Can’t you say something pleasant to poor mamma, Uncle Robert?”

Mr. Beaufort hemmed huskily, and entered the *britska*, — it had been his brother’s; the lawyer followed, and they drove away.

A week after the funeral, Philip stole from the house into the conservatory to gather some fruit for his mother; she had scarcely touched food since Beaufort’s death. She was worn to a shadow; her hair had turned gray. Now she had at last found tears, and she wept noiselessly but unceasingly.

The boy had plucked some grapes, and placed them carefully in his basket. He was about to select a nectarine that seemed riper than the rest, when his hand was roughly seized, and the gruff voice of John Green, the gardener, exclaimed, —

“What are you about, Master Philip! you must not touch them ’ere fruit!”

“How dare you, fellow!” cried the young gentleman, in a tone of equal astonishment and wrath.

“None of your airs, Master Philip! What I mean is, that some great folks are coming to look at the place to-morrow, and I won’t have my show of fruit spoiled by being pawed about by the like of you; so, that’s plain, Master Philip!”

The boy grew very pale, but remained silent. The gardener, delighted to retaliate the insolence he had received, continued, —

"You need not go for to look so spiteful, master; you are not the great man you thought you were; you are nobody now, and so you will find ere long. So, march out, if you please: I wants to lock up the glass."

As he spoke, he took the lad roughly by the arm; but Philip, the most irascible of mortals, was strong for his years, and fearless as a young lion. He caught up a watering-pot, which the gardener had deposited while he expostulated with his late tyrant, and struck the man across the face with it so violently and so suddenly that he fell back over the beds, and the glass crackled and shivered under him. Philip did not wait for the foe to recover his equilibrium; but, taking up his grapes, and possessing himself quietly of the disputed nectarine, quitted the spot, and the gardener did not think it prudent to pursue him. To boys under ordinary circumstances, — boys who have buffeted their way through a scolding nursery, a wrangling family, or a public school, — there would have been nothing in this squabble to dwell on the memory or vibrate on the nerves, after the first burst of passion; but to Philip Beaufort it was an era in life. It was the first insult he had ever received; it was his initiation into that changed, rough, and terrible career, to which the spoiled darling of vanity and love was henceforth condemned. His pride and his self-esteem had incurred a fearful shock. He entered the house, and a sickness came over him; his limbs trembled; he sat down in the hall, and placing the fruit beside him, covered his face with his hands and wept. Those were not the tears of a boy, drawn from a shallow source; they were the burning, agonizing, reluctant tears that men shed, wrung from the heart as if it were its blood. He had never been sent to school lest he should meet with mortification; he had had various tutors, trained to show rather than to exact respect, — one succeeding another, at his own whim and caprice. His natural quickness, and a very strong, hard, inquisitive turn of mind, had enabled him, however, to pick up more knowledge, though of a desultory and miscellaneous nature, than boys of his age generally possess; and his roving, independent, out-of-door existence had served to ripen

his understanding. He had certainly, in spite of every precaution, arrived at some, though not very distinct, notion of his peculiar position; but none of its inconveniences had visited him till that day. He began now to turn his eyes to the future; and vague and dark forebodings—a consciousness of the shelter, the protector, the station, he had lost in his father's death—crept coldly over him. While thus musing, a ring was heard at the bell; he lifted his head; it was the postman with a letter. Philip hastily rose, and averting his face, on which the tears were not dried, took the letter; and then, snatching up his little basket of fruit, repaired to his mother's room.

The shutters were half closed on the bright day—oh, what a mockery is there in the smile of the happy sun when it shines on the wretched! Mrs. Morton sat, or rather crouched, in a distant corner, her streaming eyes fixed on vacancy,—listless, drooping, a very image of desolate woe; and Sidney was weaving flower-chains at her feet.

"Mamma! Mother!" whispered Philip, as he threw his arms round her neck; "look up! look up! my heart breaks to see you. Do taste this fruit: you will die too, if you go on thus; and what will become of us—of Sidney?"

Mrs. Morton did look up vaguely into his face, and strove to smile.

"See, too, I have brought you a letter,—perhaps good news; shall I break the seal?"

Mrs. Morton shook her head gently, and took the letter—alas! how different from that one which Sidney had placed in her hands not two short weeks since! it was Mr. Robert Beaufort's handwriting. She shuddered, and laid it down; and then there suddenly, and for the first time, flashed across her the sense of her strange position, the dread of the future. What were her sons to be henceforth? What herself? Whatever the sanctity of her marriage, the law might fail her. At the disposition of Mr. Robert Beaufort the fate of three lives might depend. She gasped for breath, again took up the letter, and hurried over the contents; they ran thus:—

DEAR MADAM, — Knowing that you must naturally be anxious as to the future prospects of your children and yourself, left by my poor brother destitute of all provision, I take the earliest opportunity which it seems to me that propriety and decorum allow to apprise you of my intentions. I need not say that, properly speaking, you can have no kind of claim upon the relations of my late brother; nor will I hurt your feelings by those moral reflections which at this season of sorrow cannot, I hope, fail involuntarily to force themselves upon you. Without more than this mere allusion to your peculiar connection with my brother, I may however be permitted to add that that connection tended very materially to separate him from the legitimate branches of his family; and in consulting with them as to a provision for you and your children, I find that, besides scruples that are to be respected, some natural degree of soreness exists upon their minds. Out of regard, however, to my poor brother (though I saw very little of him of late years), I am willing to waive those feelings which, as a father and a husband, you may conceive that I share with the rest of my family. You will probably now decide on living with some of your own relations; and that you may not be entirely a burden to them, I beg to say that I shall allow you a hundred a year, paid, if you prefer it, quarterly. You may also select such articles of linen and plate as you require for your own use. With regard to your sons, I have no objection to place them at a grammar-school, and at a proper age to apprentice them to any trade suitable to their future station, in the choice of which your own family can give you the best advice. If they conduct themselves properly, they may always depend on my protection. I do not wish to hurry your movements; but it will probably be painful to you to remain longer than you can help in a place crowded with unpleasant recollections; and as the cottage is to be sold, — indeed, my brother-in-law, Lord Lilburne, thinks it would suit him, — you will be liable to the interruption of strangers to see it, and your prolonged residence at Fernside, you must be sensible, is rather an obstacle to the sale. I beg to inclose you a draft for £100 to pay any present expenses; and to request, when you are settled, to know where the first quarter shall be paid.

I shall write to Mr. Jackson (who, I think, is the bailiff) to detail my instructions as to selling the crops, etc., and discharging the servants; so that you may have no further trouble.

I am, madam, your obedient Servant,

ROBERT BEAUFORT

The letter fell from Catherine's hands. Her grief was changed to indignation and scorn.

"The insolent!" she exclaimed with flashing eyes. "This to me! to me! the wife, the lawful wife of his brother! the wedded mother of his brother's children!"

"Say that again, Mother! again, again!" cried Philip, in a loud voice. "His wife! wedded!"

"I swear it," said Catherine, solemnly. "I kept the secret for your father's sake. Now, for yours, the truth must be proclaimed."

"Thank God! thank God!" murmured Philip, in a quivering voice, throwing his arms round his brother. "We have no brand on our names, Sidney."

At those accents, so full of suppressed joy and pride, the mother felt at once all that her son had suspected and concealed. She felt that beneath his haughty and wayward character there had lurked delicate and generous forbearance for her; that from his equivocal position his very faults might have arisen; and a pang of remorse for her long sacrifice of the children to the father shot through her heart. It was followed by a fear, an appalling fear, more painful than the remorse. The proofs that were to clear herself and them! The words of her husband, that last awful morning, rang in her ear. The minister dead; the witness absent; the register lost! But the copy of that register!—the copy! might not that suffice? She groaned, and closed her eyes as if to shut out the future: then starting up, she hurried from the room, and went straight to Beaufort's study. As she laid her hand on the latch of the door she trembled and drew back; but care for the living was stronger at that moment than even anguish for the dead. She entered the apartment; she passed with a firm step to the bureau. It was locked; Robert Beaufort's seal upon the lock,—on every cupboard, every box, every drawer, the same seal that spoke of rights more valued than her own. But Catherine was not daunted. She turned and saw Philip by her side; she pointed to the bureau in silence; the boy understood the appeal. He left the room, and returned in a few moments with a chisel. The lock was broken.

Tremblingly and eagerly Catherine ransacked the contents; opened paper after paper, letter after letter, in vain: no certificate, no will, no memorial. Could the brother have abstracted the fatal proof? A word sufficed to explain to Philip what she sought for, and his search was more minute than hers. Every possible receptacle for papers in that room, in the whole house, was explored, and still the search was fruitless.

Three hours afterwards they were in the same room in which Philip had brought Robert Beaufort's letter to his mother. Catherine was seated, tearless, but deadly pale with heart-sickness and dismay.

"Mother," said Philip, "may I now read the letter?"

"Yes, boy; and decide for us all." She paused, and examined his face as he read. He felt her eye was upon him, and restrained his emotions as he proceeded. When he had done, he lifted his dark gaze upon Catherine's watchful countenance.

"Mother, whether or not we obtain our rights, you will still refuse this man's charity? I am young—a boy; but I am strong and active. I will work for you day and night. I have it in me,—I feel it; anything rather than eating *his* bread!"

"Philip! Philip! you are indeed my son, your father's son! And have you no reproach for your mother, who so weakly, so criminally, concealed your birthright, till, alas! discovery may be too late? Oh! reproach me, reproach me! it will be kindness. No! do not kiss me! I cannot bear it. Boy! boy! if, as my heart tells me, we fail in proof, do you understand what in the world's eye I am; what you are?"

"I do!" said Philip, firmly; and he fell on his knees at her feet. "Whatever others call you, you are a mother, and I your son. You are, in the judgment of Heaven, my father's Wife, and I his Heir."

Catherine bowed her head, and with a gush of tears, fell into his arms. Sidney crept up to her, and forced his lips to her cold cheek. "Mamma! what vexes you? Mamma, Mamma!"

"Oh, Sidney! Sidney! How like his father! Look at him,

Philip! Shall we do right to refuse him even this pittance? Must *he* be a beggar too?"

"Never a beggar," said Philip, with a pride that showed what hard lessons he had yet to learn. "The lawful sons of a Beaufort were not born to beg their bread!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE storm above, and frozen world below.

The olive bough
Faded and cast upon the common wind,
And earth a doveless ark. — LAMAN BLANCHARD.

MR. ROBERT BEAUFORT was generally considered by the world a very worthy man. He had never committed any excess, — never gambled nor incurred debt, nor fallen into the warm errors most common with his sex. He was a good husband, a careful father, an agreeable neighbour; rather charitable than otherwise to the poor; he was honest and methodical in his dealings, and had been known to behave handsomely in different relations of life. Mr. Robert Beaufort, indeed, always meant to do what was right — *in the eyes of the world!* He had no other rule of action but that which the world supplied; his religion was decorum, his sense of honour was regard to opinion. His heart was a dial to which the world was the sun: when the great eye of the public fell on it, it answered every purpose that a heart could answer; but when that eye was invisible, the dial was mute, — a piece of brass and nothing more.

It is just to Robert Beaufort to assure the reader that he wholly disbelieved his brother's story of a private marriage. He considered that tale, when heard for the first time, as the mere invention (and a shallow one) of a man wishing to make

the imprudent step he was about to take as respectable as he could. The careless tone of his brother when speaking upon the subject, his confession that of such a marriage there were no distinct proofs except a copy of a register, which copy Robert had not found, made his incredulity natural. He therefore deemed himself under no obligation of delicacy or respect to a woman through whose means he had very nearly lost a noble succession, — a woman who had not even borne his brother's name; a woman whom nobody knew. Had Mrs. Morton been Mrs. Beaufort, and the natural sons legitimate children, Robert Beaufort, supposing their situation of relative power and dependence to have been the same, would have behaved with careful and scrupulous generosity. The world would have said, "Nothing can be handsomer than Mr. Robert Beaufort's conduct!" Nay, if Mrs. Morton had been some divorced wife of birth and connections, he would have made very different dispositions in her favour; he would not have allowed the connections to call him *shabby*. But here he felt that, all circumstances considered, the world, if it spoke at all (which it would scarce think it worth while to do), would be on his side. An artful woman — low-born, and, of course, low-bred — who wanted to inveigle her rich and careless paramour into marriage — what could be expected from the man she had sought to injure, the rightful heir? Was it not very good in him to do anything for her; and if he provided for the children suitably to the original station of the mother, did he not go to the very utmost of reasonable expectation? He certainly thought in his conscience, such as it was, that he had acted well, — not extravagantly, not foolishly; but *well*. He was sure the world would say so if it knew all: he was not bound to do anything. He was not, therefore, prepared for Catherine's short, haughty, but temperate reply to his letter, — a reply which conveyed a decided refusal of his offers, asserted positively her own marriage and the claims of her children, intimated legal proceedings, and was signed in the name of Catherine *Beaufort*. Mr. Beaufort put the letter in his bureau, labelled, "Impertinent answer from Mrs. Morton, September 14;" and was quite contented to forget the exist-

ence of the writer, until his lawyer, Mr. Blackwell, informed him that a suit had been instituted by Catherine.

Mr. Robert turned pale, but Blackwell composed him.

"Pooh, sir! you have nothing to fear. It is but an attempt to extort money. The attorney is a low practitioner, accustomed to get up bad cases; they can make nothing of it."

This was true. Whatever the rights of the case, poor Catherine had no proofs, no evidence, which could justify a respectable lawyer to advise her proceeding to a suit. She named two witnesses of her marriage, — one dead, the other could not be heard of. She selected for the alleged place in which the ceremony was performed a very remote village, in which it appeared that the register had been destroyed. No attested copy thereof was to be found, and Catherine was stunned on hearing that, even if found, it was doubtful whether it could be received as evidence, unless to corroborate actual personal testimony. It so happened that when Philip, many years ago, had received a copy, he had not shown it to Catherine, nor mentioned Mr. Jones's name as the copyist. In fact, then only three years married to Catherine, his worldly caution had not yet been conquered by confident experience of her generosity. As for the mere moral evidence dependent on the publication of her bans in London, that amounted to no proof whatever; nor, on inquiry at A——, did the Welsh villagers remember anything further than that, some fifteen years ago, a handsome gentleman had visited Mr. Price, and one or two rather thought that Mr. Price had married him to a lady from London, — evidence quite inadmissible against the deadly, damning fact that for fifteen years Catherine had *openly* borne another name, and lived with Mr. Beaufort ostensibly as his mistress. Her generosity in this destroyed her case. Nevertheless, she found a low practitioner, who took her money and neglected her cause; so her suit was heard and dismissed with contempt. Henceforth, then, indeed, in the eyes of the law and the public, Catherine was an impudent adventurer and her sons were nameless outcasts.

And now, relieved from all fear, Mr. Robert Beaufort

entered upon the full enjoyment of his splendid fortune. The house in Berkeley Square was furnished anew. Great dinners and gay routs were given in the ensuing spring. Mr. and Mrs. Beaufort became persons of considerable importance. The rich man had, even when poor, been ambitious; his ambition now centred in his only son. Arthur had always been considered a boy of talents and promise; to what might he not now aspire? The term of his probation with the tutor was abridged, and Arthur Beaufort was sent at once to Oxford.

Before he went to the University, during a short preparatory visit to his father, Arthur spoke to him of the Mortons.

"What has become of them, sir; and what have you done for them?"

"Done for them!" said Mr. Beaufort, opening his eyes. "What should I do for persons who have just been harassing me with the most unprincipled litigation? My conduct to them has been too generous, — that is, all things considered; but when you are my age you will find there is very little gratitude in the world, Arthur."

"Still, sir," said Arthur, with the good nature that belonged to him, "still, my uncle was greatly attached to them; and the boys at least are guiltless."

"Well, well!" replied Mr. Beaufort, a little impatiently; "I believe they want for nothing. I fancy they are with the mother's relations. Whenever they address me in a proper manner they shall not find me revengeful or hard-hearted; but since we are on this topic," continued the father, smoothing his shirt-frill with a care that showed his decorum even in trifles, "I hope you see the results of that kind of connection, and that you will take warning by your poor uncle's example. And now let us change the subject; it is not a very pleasant one, and at your age the less your thoughts turn on such matters the better."

Arthur Beaufort, with the careless generosity of youth, that gauges other men's conduct by its own sentiments, believed that his father, who had never been niggardly to himself, had really acted as his words implied; and engrossed by the pursuits of the new and brilliant career opened, whether to his

pleasures or his studies, suffered the objects of his inquiries to pass from his thoughts.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Morton, for by that name we must still call her, and her children, were settled in a small lodging in a humble suburb, situated on the high road between Fernside and the metropolis. She saved from her hopeless law-suit, after the sale of her jewels and ornaments, a sufficient sum to enable her, with economy, to live respectably for a year or two at least, during which time she might arrange her plans for the future. She reckoned, as a sure resource, upon the assistance of her relations; but it was one to which she applied with natural shame and reluctance. She had kept up a correspondence with her father during his life. To him she never revealed the secret of her marriage, though she did not write like a person conscious of error. Perhaps, as she always said to her son, she had made to her husband a solemn promise never to divulge or even hint that secret until he himself should authorize its disclosure; for neither he nor Catherine ever contemplated separation or death. Alas! how all of us, when happy, sleep secure in the dark shadows, which ought to warn us of the sorrows that are to come! Still Catherine's father, a man of coarse mind and not rigid principles, did not take much to heart that connection which he assumed to be illicit. She was provided for, — that was some comfort. Doubtless Mr. Beaufort would act like a gentleman, perhaps at last make her an honest woman and a lady. Meanwhile, she had a fine house and a fine carriage and fine servants; and so far from applying to him for money, was constantly sending him little presents. But Catherine only saw in his permission of her correspondence kind, forgiving, and trustful affection, and she loved him tenderly; when he died, the link that bound her to her family was broken. Her brother succeeded to the trade, — a man of probity and honour, but somewhat hard and unamiable. In the only letter she had received from him — the one announcing her father's death — he told her plainly, and very properly, that he could not countenance the life she led; that he had children growing up; that all intercourse between them was at an end, unless she left Mr.

Beaufort, — when, if she sincerely repented, he would still prove her affectionate brother.

Though Catherine had at the time resented this letter as unfeeling, now, humbled and sorrow-stricken, she recognized the propriety of principle from which it emanated. Her brother was well off for his station; she would explain to him her real situation; he would believe her story. She would write to him, and beg him at least to give aid to her poor children.

But this step she did not take till a considerable portion of her pittance was consumed, till nearly three parts of a year since Beaufort's death had expired, and till sundry warnings, not to be lightly heeded, had made her forbode the probability of an early death for herself. From the age of sixteen, when she had been placed by Mr. Beaufort at the head of his household, she had been cradled, not in extravagance, but in an easy luxury, which had not brought with it habits of economy and thrift. She could grudge anything to herself, but to her children — *his* children, whose every whim had been anticipated — she had not the heart to be saving. She could have starved in a garret had she been alone; but she could not see them wanting a comfort while she possessed a guinea. Philip, to do him justice, evinced a consideration not to have been expected from his early and arrogant recklessness; but Sidney, — who could expect consideration from such a child; what could he know of the change of circumstances, of the value of money? Did he seem dejected, Catherine would steal out and spend a week's income on the lapful of toys which she brought home. Did he seem a shade more pale, did he complain of the slightest ailment, a doctor must be sent for. Alas! her own ailments, neglected and unheeded, were growing beyond the reach of medicine. Anxious, fearful, gnawed by regret for the past, the thought of famine in the future, she daily fretted and wore herself away. She had cultivated her mind during her secluded residence with Mr. Beaufort; but she had learned none of the arts by which decayed gentlewomen keep the wolf from the door, — no little holiday accomplishments, which in the day of need turn to useful trade; no

water-colour drawings, no paintings on velvet, no fabrications of pretty gewgaws, no embroidery and fine needlework. She was helpless, utterly helpless; if she had resigned herself to the thought of service, she would not have had the physical strength for a place of drudgery, — and where could she have found the testimonials necessary for a place of trust? A great change at this time was apparent in Philip. Had he fallen, then, into kind hands, and under guiding eyes, his passions and energies might have ripened into rare qualities and great virtues; but perhaps, as Goethe has somewhere said, "Experience, after all, is the best teacher." He kept a constant guard on his vehement temper, his wayward will; he would not have vexed his mother for the world. But, strange to say (it was a great mystery in the woman's heart), in proportion as he became more amiable, it seemed that his mother loved him less. Perhaps she did not in that change recognize so closely the darling of the old time; perhaps the very weaknesses and importunities of Sidney, the hourly sacrifices the child entailed upon her, endeared the younger son more to her from that natural sense of dependence and protection which forms the great bond between mother and child; perhaps too, as Philip had been one to inspire as much pride as affection, so the pride faded away with the expectations that had fed it, and carried off in its decay some of the affection that was intertwined with it. However this be, Philip had formerly appeared the more spoiled and favoured of the two, and now Sidney seemed all in all. Thus, beneath the younger son's caressing gentleness, there grew up a certain regard for self. It was latent, it took amiable colours; it had even a certain charm and grace in so sweet a child; but selfishness it was not the less. In this he differed from his brother. Philip was self-willed, Sidney self-loving. A certain timidity of character, endearing perhaps to the anxious heart of a mother, made this fault in the younger boy more likely to take root; for in bold natures there is a lavish and uncalculating recklessness which scorns self unconsciously: and though there is a fear which arises from a loving heart, and is but sympathy for others, the fear which belongs to a timid character is but ego-

tism, — but, when physical, the regard for one's own person; when moral, the anxiety for one's own interests.

It was in a small room in a lodging-house in the suburb of H—— that Mrs. Morton was seated by the window, nervously awaiting the knock of the postman, who was expected to bring her brother's reply to her letter. It was therefore between ten and eleven o'clock, a morning in the merry month of June. It was hot and sultry, which is rare in an English June. A flytrap, red, white, and yellow, suspended from the ceiling, swarmed with flies; flies were on the ceiling, flies buzzed at the windows; the sofa and chairs of horsehair seemed stuffed with flies. There was an air of heated discomfort in the thick, solid moreen curtains, in the gaudy paper, in the bright-staring carpet, in the very looking-glass over the chimneypiece, where a strip of mirror lay imprisoned in an embrace of frame covered with yellow muslin. We may talk of the dreariness of winter, — and winter no doubt is desolate; but what in the world is more dreary to eyes inured to the verdure and bloom of Nature —

“The pomp of groves and garniture of fields” —

than a close room in a suburban lodging-house, — the sun piercing every corner; nothing fresh, nothing cool, nothing fragrant, to be seen, felt, or inhaled; all dust, glare, noise, with a chandler's shop, perhaps, next door? Sidney, armed with a pair of scissors, was cutting the pictures out of a story-book, which his mother had bought him the day before. Philip, who of late had taken much to rambling about the streets, — it may be in hopes of meeting one of those benevolent, eccentric, elderly gentlemen he had read of in old novels, who suddenly come to the relief of distressed virtue; or, more probably, from the restlessness that belonged to his adventurous temperament, — Philip had left the house since breakfast.

“Oh, how hot this nasty room is!” exclaimed Sidney, abruptly, looking up from his employment. “Sha'n't we ever go into the country again, Mamma?”

“Not at present, my love.”

"I wish I could have my pony; why can't I have my pony, Mamma?"

"Because — because — the pony is sold, Sidney."

"Who sold it?"

"Your uncle."

"He is a very naughty man, my uncle; is he not? But can't I have another pony? It would be so nice, this fine weather!"

"Ah! my dear, I wish I could afford it; but you shall have a ride this week! Yes," continued the mother, as if reasoning with herself in excuse of the extravagance, "he does not look well; poor child! he *must* have exercise."

"A ride! — oh, that is my own kind Mamma!" exclaimed Sidney, clapping his hands. "Not on a donkey, you know! — a pony. The man down the street there lets ponies. I must have the white pony with the long tail. But, I say, Mamma, don't tell Philip, pray don't; he would be jealous."

"No, not jealous, my dear; why do you think so?"

"Because he is always angry when I ask you for anything. It is very unkind in him, for I don't care if he has a pony, too, — only not the white one."

Here the postman's knock, loud and sudden, startled Mrs. Morton from her seat.

She pressed her hands tightly to her heart, as if to still its beating, and went tremulously to the door; thence to the stairs, to anticipate the lumbering step of the slipshod maid-servant.

"Give it me, Jane; give it me!"

"One shilling and eightpence — charged double — if *you* please, ma'am! Thank you."

"Mamma, may I tell Jane to engage the pony?"

"Not now, my love; sit down; be quiet: I — I am not well."

Sidney, who was affectionate and obedient, crept back peaceably to the window, and after a short, impatient sigh resumed the scissors and the story-book.

I do not apologize to the reader for the various letters I am

obliged to lay before him; for character often betrays itself more in letters than in speech. Mr. Roger Morton's reply was couched in these terms:—

DEAR CATHERINE, — I have received your letter of the 14th inst., and write per return. I am very much grieved to hear of your afflictions; but, whatever you say, I cannot think the late Mr. Beaufort acted like a conscientious man in forgetting to make his will, and leaving his little ones destitute. It is all very well to talk of his intentions, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating; and it is hard upon me, who have a large family of my own, and get my livelihood by honest industry, to have a rich gentleman's children to maintain. As for your story about the private marriage, it may or may not be. Perhaps you were taken in by that worthless man, for a *real* marriage it could not be. And, as you say, the law has decided that point; therefore, the less you say on the matter the better. It all comes to the same thing. People are not bound to believe what can't be proved; and even if what you say is true, you are more to be blamed than pitied for holding your tongue so many years, and discrediting an honest family, as ours has always been considered. I am sure *my* wife would not have thought of such a thing for the finest gentleman that ever wore shoe-leather. However, I don't want to hurt your feelings; and I am sure I am ready to do whatever is right and proper. You cannot expect that I should ask you to my house. My wife, you know, is a very religious woman, — what is called evangelical; but that's neither here nor there. I deal with all people, churchmen and dissenters, — even Jews, — and don't trouble my head much about differences in opinion. I dare say there are many ways to heaven, — as I said the other day to Mr. Thwaites, our member. But it is right to say my wife will not hear of your coming here; and, indeed, it might do harm to my business, for there are several elderly single gentlewomen who buy flannel for the poor at my shop, and they are very particular, — as they ought to be, indeed; for morals are very strict in this county, and particularly in this town, where we certainly do pay very high church-rates. Not that I grumble; for, though I am as liberal as any man, I am for an established church, — as I ought to be, since the dean is my best customer. With regard to yourself I inclose you £10, and you will let me know when it is gone, and I will see what more I can do. You say you are very poorly, which I am sorry to hear; but you must pluck up your spirits, and take in plain work; and I really think you ought to apply to Mr. Robert Beaufort. He bears a high character; and notwithstanding your lawsuit, which I cannot approve of, I dare say he might allow you £40 or £50

a year, if you apply properly, which would be the right thing in him. So much for you. As for the boys, — poor, fatherless creatures! — it is very hard that they should be so punished for no fault of their own; and my wife, who, though strict, is a good-hearted woman, is ready and willing to do what I wish about them. You say the eldest is near sixteen, and well come on in his studies. I can get him a very good thing in a light genteel way. My wife's brother, Mr. Christopher Plaskwith, is a bookseller and stationer with pretty practice, in R——. He is a clever man, and has a newspaper, which he kindly sends me every week; and though it is not my county, it has some very sensible views, and is often noticed in the London papers as 'our provincial contemporary.' Mr. Plaskwith owes me some money, which I advanced him when he set up the paper, and he has several times most honestly offered to pay me in shares in the said paper; but as the thing might break, and I don't like concerns I don't understand, I have not taken advantage of his very handsome proposals. Now, Plaskwith wrote me word, two days ago, that he wanted a genteel, smart lad, as assistant and 'prentice, and offered to take my eldest boy; but we can't spare him. I write to Christopher by this post; and if your youth will run down on the top of the coach, and inquire for Mr. Plaskwith, — the fare is trifling, — I have no doubt he will be engaged at once. But you will say, 'There's the premium to consider!' No such thing; Kit will set off the premium against his debt to me, so you will have nothing to pay. 'Tis a very pretty business; and the lad's education will get him on; so that's off your mind. As to the little chap, I'll take him at once. You say he is a pretty boy, and a pretty boy is always a help in a linen-draper's shop. He shall share and share with my own young folks, and Mrs. Morton will take care of his washing and morals. I conclude — this is Mrs. M.'s suggestion — that he has had the measles, cowpock, and whooping-cough, which please let me know. If he behave well, which at his age we can easily break him into, he is settled for life. So now you have got rid of two mouths to feed, and have nobody to think of but yourself, which must be a great comfort. Don't forget to write to Mr. Beaufort, and if he don't do something for you he's not the gentleman I take him for; but you are my own flesh and blood, and sha'n't starve; for though I don't think it right in a man in business to encourage what's wrong, yet when a person's down in the world, I think an ounce of help is better than a pound of preaching. My wife thinks otherwise, and wants to send you some tracts; but everybody can't be as correct as some folks. However, as I said before, that's neither here nor there. Let me know when your boy comes down, and also about the measles, cow-pock, and whooping-cough; also if all's right with Mr.

Plaskwith. So now I hope you will feel more comfortable; and remain,
dear Catherine, Your forgiving and affectionate brother,

ROGER MORTON.

HIGH STREET, N—, *June 13.*

P. S. — Mrs. M. says that she will be a mother to your little boy, and that you had better mend up all his linen before you send him.

As Catherine finished this epistle, she lifted her eyes and beheld Philip. He had entered noiselessly, and he remained silent, leaning against the wall, and watching the face of his mother, which crimsoned with painful humiliation while she read. Philip was not now the trim and dainty stripling first introduced to the reader. He had outgrown his faded suit of funereal mourning; his long-neglected hair hung elf-like and matted down his cheeks; there was a gloomy look in his bright dark eyes. Poverty never betrays itself more than in the features and form of Pride. It was evident that his spirit endured, rather than accommodated itself to, his fallen state; and notwithstanding his soiled and threadbare garments, and a haggardness that ill becomes the years of palmy youth, there was about his whole mien and person a wild and savage grandeur more impressive than his former ruffling arrogance of manner.

"Well, Mother," said he, with a strange mixture of sternness in his countenance and pity in his voice, — "well, Mother, and what says your brother?"

"You decided for us once before; decide again. But I need not ask you; you would never —"

"I don't know," interrupted Philip, vaguely; "let me see what we are to decide on."

Mrs. Morton was naturally a woman of high courage and spirit, but sickness and grief had worn down both; and though Philip was but sixteen, there is something in the very nature of woman — especially in trouble — which makes her seek to lean on some other will than her own. She gave Philip the letter, and went quietly to sit down by Sidney.

"Your brother means well," said Philip, when he had concluded the epistle.

"Yes, but nothing is to be done; I cannot, cannot send poor Sidney to — to —" and Mrs. Morton sobbed.

"No, my dear, dear Mother, no; it would be terrible indeed to part you and him. But this bookseller — Plaskwith — perhaps I shall be able to support you both."

"Why, you do not think, Philip, of being an apprentice! — you, who have been so brought up; you, who are so proud!"

"Mother, I would sweep the crossings for your sake! Mother, for your sake I would go to my uncle Beaufort with my hat in my hand, for halfpence. Mother, I am not proud. I would be honest, if I can; but when I see you pining away, and so changed, the devil comes into me, and I often shudder lest I should commit some crime — what, I don't know!"

"Come here, Philip, my own Philip, my son, my hope, my firstborn!" and the mother's heart gushed forth in all the fondness of early days. "Don't speak so terribly, you frighten me!"

She threw her arms round his neck, and kissed him soothingly. He laid his burning temples on her bosom, and nestled himself to her, as he had been wont to do after some stormy paroxysm of his passionate and wayward infancy. So there they remained — their lips silent, their hearts speaking to each other, each from each taking strange succour and holy strength — till Philip rose, calm, and with a quiet smile. "Good-by, Mother; I will go at once to Mr. Plaskwith."

"But you have no money for the coach-fare; here, Philip," and she placed her purse in his hand, from which he reluctantly selected a few shilings. "And mind, if the man is rude and you dislike him, — mind, you must not subject yourself to insolence and mortification."

"Oh, all will go well, don't fear," said Philip, cheerfully, and he left the house.

Towards evening he had reached his destination. The shop was of goodly exterior, with a private entrance. Over the shop was written, "Christopher Plaskwith, Bookseller and Stationer;" on the private door a brass plate, inscribed with "R — and * — Mercury Office, Mr. Plaskwith." Philip

applied at the private entrance, and was shown by a "neat-handed Phillis" into a small office-room. In a few minutes the door opened, and the bookseller entered.

Mr. Christopher Plaskwith was a short, stout man, in drab-coloured breeches, and gaiters to match; a black coat and waistcoat; he wore a large watch-chain, with a prodigious bunch of seals, alternated by small keys and old-fashioned mourning-rings. His complexion was pale and sodden, and his hair short, dark, and sleek. The bookseller valued himself on a likeness to Buonaparte, and affected a short, brusque, peremptory manner, which he meant to be the indication of the vigorous and decisive character of his prototype.

"So you are the young gentleman Mr. Roger Morton recommends?" Here Mr. Plaskwith took out a huge pocket-book, slowly unclasped it, staring hard at Philip, with what he designed for a piercing and penetrating survey.

"This is the letter — no! this is Sir Thomas Champerdown's order for fifty copies of the last "Mercury," containing his speech at the county meeting. Your age, young man? — only sixteen? — look older; — that's not it, that's not it — and this is it! Sit down. Yes, Mr. Roger Morton recommends you, — a relation — unfortunate circumstances — well educated — hum! Well, young man, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Sir?"

"Can you cast accounts; know bookkeeping?"

"I know something of algebra, sir."

"Algebra! — oh, what else?"

"French and Latin."

"Hum! — may be useful. Why do you wear your hair so long? — look at mine. What's your name?"

"Philip Morton."

"Mr. Philip Morton, you have an intelligent countenance, — I go a great deal by countenances. You know the terms? — most favourable to you. No premium — I settle that with Roger; I give board and bed, — find your own washing; habits regular, — 'prenticeship only five years; when over, must not set up in the same town. I will see to the indentures. When can you come?"

"When you please, sir."

"Day after to-morrow, by six o'clock coach."

"But, sir," said Philip, "will there be no salary, — something, ever so small, that I could send to my mother?"

"Salary, at sixteen? — board and bed — no premium! Salary, what for? 'Prentices have no salary! — you will have every comfort."

"Give me less comfort, that I may give my mother more, — a little money, ever so little, and take it out of my board. I can do with one meal a day, sir."

The bookseller was moved; he took a huge pinch of snuff out of his waistcoat pocket, and mused a moment. He then said, as he re-examined Philip, —

"Well, young man, I'll tell you what we will do. You shall come here first upon trial; see if we like each other before we sign the indentures; allow you, meanwhile, five shillings a week. If you show talent, will see if I and Roger can settle about some little allowance. That do, eh?"

"I thank you, sir, yes," said Philip, gratefully.

"Agreed, then. Follow me; present you to Mrs. P."

Thus saying, Mr. Plaskwith returned the letter to the pocketbook, and the pocketbook to the pocket; and putting his arms behind his coat tails, threw up his chin, and strode through the passage into a small parlour, that looked upon a small garden. Here, seated round the table, were a thin lady, with a squint, Mrs. Plaskwith, two little girls, the Misses Plaskwith, also with squints, and pinafores; a young man of three or four-and-twenty, in nankeen trousers, a little the worse for washing, and a black velveteen jacket and waistcoat. This young gentleman was very much freckled; wore his hair, which was dark and wiry, up at one side, down at the other; had a short thick nose; full lips; and when close to him smelt of cigars. Such was Mr. Plimmins, Mr. Plaskwith's *factotum*, foreman in the shop, assistant editor to the "Mercury." Mr. Plaskwith formally went the round of the introduction. Mrs. P. nodded her head; the Misses P. nudged each other, and grinned; Mr. Plimmins passed his hand through his hair, glanced at the glass, and bowed very politely.

"Now, Mrs. P., my second cup, and give Mr. Morton *his* dish of tea. Must be tired, sir — hot day. Jemima, ring — no, go to the stairs and call out 'More buttered toast.' That's the shorter way — promptitude is my rule in life, Mr. Morton. Pray — hum, hum — have you ever, by chance, studied the biography of the great Napoleon Buonaparte?"

Mr. Plimmins gulped down his tea, and kicked Philip under the table. Philip looked fiercely at the foreman, and replied sullenly, "No, sir."

"That's a pity. Napoleon Buonaparte was a very great man, — very! You have seen his cast? — there it is, on the dumb waiter! Look at it! see a likeness, eh?"

"Likeness, sir? I never saw Napoleon Buonaparte."

"Never saw *him*! No, just look round the room. Who does that bust put you in mind of; who does it resemble?"

Here Mr. Plaskwith rose, and placed himself in an attitude, — his hand in his waistcoat, and his face pensively inclined towards the tea-table. "Now fancy me at St. Helena; this table is the ocean. Now, then, who is that cast like, Mr. Philip Morton?"

"I suppose, sir, it is like you!"

"Ah, that it is! strikes every one! Does it not, Mrs. P., does it not? And when you have known me longer, you will find a moral similitude, — a moral, sir! Straightforward, short, to the point, bold, determined!"

"Bless me, Mr. P.!" said Mrs. Plaskwith, very querulously, "do make haste with your tea; the young gentleman, I suppose, wants to go home, and the coach passes in a quarter of an hour."

"Have you seen Kean in 'Richard the Third,' Mr. Morton?" asked Mr. Plimmins.

"I have never seen a play."

"Never seen a play! How very odd!"

"Not at all odd, Mr. Plimmins," said the stationer. "Mr. Morton has known troubles, — so hand him the hot toast."

Silent and morose, but rather disdainful than sad, Philip listened to the babble round him, and observed the ungenial characters with which he was to associate. He cared not to

please (*that*, alas! had never been especially his study); it was enough for him if he could see, stretching to his mind's eye beyond the walls of that dull room, the long vistas into fairer fortune. At sixteen, what sorrow can freeze the Hope, or what prophetic fear whisper "Fool" to the Ambition? He would bear back into ease and prosperity, if not into affluence and station, the dear ones left at home. From the eminence of five shillings a week, he looked over the Promised Land.

At length, Mr. Plaskwith, pulling out his watch, said, "Just in time to catch the coach; make your bow and be off—smart's the word!" Philip rose, took up his hat, made a stiff bow that included the whole group, and vanished with his host.

Mrs. Plaskwith breathed more easily when he was gone.

"I never seed a more odd, fierce, ill-bred-looking young man! I declare I am quite afraid of him. What an eye he has!"

"Uncommonly dark; what I may say gypsy-like," said Mr. Plimmins.

"He! he! You always do say such good things, Plimmins. Gypsy-like, he! he! So he is! I wonder if he can tell fortunes."

"He'll be long before he has a fortune of his own to tell. Ha! ha!" said Plimmins.

"He! he! how *very* good! you are *so* pleasant, Plimmins."

While these strictures on his appearance were still going on, Philip had already ascended the roof of the coach; and waving his hand, with the condescension of old times, to his future master, was carried away by the "Express" in a whirlwind of dust.

"A very warm evening, sir," said a passenger seated at his right, puffing, while he spoke, from a short German pipe a volume of smoke into Philip's face.

"Very warm. Be so good as to smoke into the face of the gentleman on the other side of you," returned Philip, petulantly.

"Ho, ho!" replied the passenger, with a loud, powerful

laugh, — the laugh of a strong man. “You don’t take to the pipe yet; you will by and by, when you have known the cares and anxieties that I have gone through. A pipe! — it is a great soother, a pleasant comforter! Blue devils fly before its honest breath! It ripens the brain; it opens the heart; and the man who smokes thinks like a sage and acts like a Samaritan!”

Roused from his reverie by this quaint and unexpected declamation, Philip turned his quick glance at his neighbour. He saw a man of great bulk and immense physical power, — broad-shouldered, deep-chested; not corpulent, but taking the same girth from bone and muscle that a corpulent man does from flesh. He wore a blue coat, frogged, braided, and buttoned to the throat. A broad-brimmed straw hat, set on one side, gave a jaunty appearance to a countenance which, notwithstanding its jovial complexion and smiling mouth, had in repose a bold and decided character. It was a face well suited to the frame, inasmuch as it betokened a mind capable of wielding and mastering the brute physical force of body, — light eyes of piercing intelligence, rough but resolute and striking features, and a jaw of iron. There was thought, there was power, there was passion in the shaggy brow, the deep-ploughed lines, the dilated nostril, and the restless play of the lips. Philip looked hard and grave, and the man returned his look.

“What do you think of me, young gentleman?” asked the passenger, as he replaced the pipe in his mouth. “I am a fine-looking man, am I not?”

“You seem a strange one.”

“Strange! Ay, I puzzle you, as I have done, and shall do, many. You cannot read me as easily as I can read you. Come, shall I guess at your character and circumstances? You are a gentleman, or something like it, by birth; that the tone of your voice tells me. You are poor, devilish poor; that the hole in your coat assures me. You are proud, fiery, discontented, and unhappy; all that I see in your face. It was because I saw those signs that I spoke to you. I volunteer no acquaintance with the happy.”

"I dare say not; for if you know all the unhappy you must have a sufficiently large acquaintance," returned Philip.

"Your wit is beyond your years! What is your calling, if the question does not offend you?"

"I have none as yet," said Philip, with a slight sigh, and a deep blush.

"More's the pity!" grunted the smoker, with a long, emphatic, nasal intonation. "I should have judged that you were a raw recruit in the camp of the enemy."

"Enemy! I don't understand you."

"In other words, a plant growing out of a lawyer's desk. I will explain. There is one class of spiders, industrious, hard-working octopedes, who, out of the sweat of their brains (I take it, by the by, that a spider must have a fine craniological development), make their own webs and catch their flies. There is another class of spiders who have no stuff in them wherewith to make webs; they therefore wander about, looking out for food provided by the toil of their neighbours. Whenever they come to the web of a smaller spider whose larder seems well supplied, they rush upon his domain, pursue him to his hole, eat him up if they can, reject him if he is too tough for their maws, and quietly possess themselves of all the legs and wings they find dangling in his meshes. These spiders I call enemies; the world calls them lawyers!"

Philip laughed. "And who are the first class of spiders?"

"Honest creatures who openly confess that they live upon flies. Lawyers fall foul upon them, under pretence of delivering flies from their clutches. They are wonderful blood-suckers, these lawyers, in spite of all their hypocrisy. Ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho!"

And with a loud, rough chuckle, more expressive of malignity than mirth, the man turned himself round, applied vigorously to his pipe, and sank into a silence which, as mile after mile glided past the wheels, he did not seem disposed to break. Neither was Philip inclined to be communicative. Considerations for his own state and prospects swallowed up the curiosity he might otherwise have felt as to his singular neighbour. He had not touched food since the early

morning. Anxiety had made him insensible to hunger till he arrived at Mr. Plaskwith's; and then, feverish, sore, and sick at heart, the sight of the luxuries gracing the tea-table only revolted him. He did not now feel hunger, but he was fatigued and faint. For several nights the sleep which youth can so ill dispense with had been broken and disturbed; and now, the rapid motion of the coach, and the free current of a fresher and more exhausting air than he had been accustomed to for many months, began to operate on his nerves like the intoxication of a narcotic. His eyes grew heavy; indistinct mists, through which there seemed to glare the various squints of the female Plaskwiths, succeeded the gliding road and the dancing trees. His head fell on his bosom; and thence, instinctively seeking the strongest support at hand, inclined towards the stout smoker, and finally nestled itself composedly on that gentleman's shoulder. The passenger, feeling this unwelcome and unsolicited weight, took the pipe, which he had already thrice refilled, from his lips, and emitted an angry and impatient snort. Finding that this produced no effect and that the load grew heavier as the boy's sleep grew deeper, he cried, in a loud voice, "Holla! I did not pay my fare to be your bolster, young man!" and shook himself lustily. Philip started, and would have fallen sidelong from the coach, if his neighbour had not griped him hard with a hand that could have kept a young oak from falling.

"Rouse yourself! you might have had an ugly tumble."

Philip muttered something inaudible, between sleeping and waking, and turned his dark eyes towards the man; in that glance there was so much unconscious but sad and deep reproach, that the passenger felt touched and ashamed. Before however, he could say anything in apology or conciliation, Philip had again fallen asleep. But this time, as if he had felt and resented the rebuff he had received, he inclined his head away from his neighbour against the edge of a box on the roof, — a dangerous pillow, from which any sudden jolt might transfer him to the road below.

"Poor lad! he looks pale!" muttered the man, and he knocked the weed from his pipe, which he placed gently in

his pocket. "Perhaps the smoke was too much for him, — he seems ill and thin," and he took the boy's long lean fingers in his own. "His cheek is hollow! — what do I know but it may be with fasting? Pooh! I was a brute. Hush, coachee, hush! don't talk so loud, and be d—d to you — he will certainly be off!" and the man softly and creepingly encircled the boy's waist with his huge arm. "Now, then, to shift his head; so — so, — that's right." Philip's sallow cheek and long hair were now tenderly lapped on the soliloquist's bosom. "Poor wretch! he smiles; perhaps he is thinking of home, and the butterflies he ran after when he was an urchin — they never come back, those days — never, never, never! I think the wind veers to the east; he may catch cold;" and with that, the man, sliding the head for a moment, and with the tenderness of a woman, from his breast to his shoulder, unbuttoned his coat, as he replaced the weight, no longer unwelcome, in its former part, and drew the lappets closely round the slender frame of the sleeper, exposing his own sturdy breast — for he wore no waistcoat — to the sharpening air. Thus cradled on that stranger's bosom, wrapped from the present and dreaming perhaps — while a heart scorched by fierce and terrible struggles with life and sin made his pillow — of a fair and unsullied future, slept the fatherless and friendless boy.

CHAPTER VII.

Constance. My life, my joy, my food, my all the world,
My widow-comfort. — *King John.*

AMIDST the glare of lamps, the rattle of carriages, the lumbering of carts and wagons, the throng, the clamour, the reeking life and dissonant roar of London, Philip woke from his happy sleep. He woke uncertain and confused, and saw strange eyes bent on him kindly and watchfully.

"You have slept well, my lad!" said the passenger, in the deep ringing voice which made itself heard above all the noises around.

"And you have suffered me to incommode you thus!" said Philip, with more gratitude in his voice and look than, perhaps, he had shown to any one out of his own family since his birth.

"You have had but little kindness shown you, my poor boy, if you think so much of this."

"No; all people were very kind to me once. I did not value it then." Here the coach rolled heavily down the dark arch of the inn-yard.

"Take care of yourself, my boy! You look ill;" and in the dark the man slipped a sovereign into Philip's hand.

"I don't want money, — though I thank you heartily all the same; it would be a shame at my age to be a beggar. But can you think of an employment where I can make something? — what they offer me is so trifling. I have a mother and a brother — a mere child, sir — at home."

"Employment!" repeated the man; and as the coach now stopped at the tavern door, the light of the lamp fell full on his marked face. "Ay, I know of employment; but you should apply to some one else to obtain it for you! As for me, it is not likely that we shall meet again!"

"I am sorry for that! What and who are you?" asked Philip, with a rude and blunt curiosity.

"Me!" returned the passenger, with his deep laugh. "Oh, I know some people who call me an honest fellow. Take the employment offered you, no matter how trifling the wages; keep out of harm's way. Good night to you!"

So saying, he quickly descended from the roof; and as he was directing the coachman where to look for his carpet-bag, Philip saw three or four well-dressed men make up to him, shake him heartily by the hand, and welcome him with great seeming cordiality.

Philip sighed. "He has friends," he muttered to himself; and paying his fare, he turned from the bustling yard, and took his solitary way home.

A week after his visit to R——, Philip was settled on his probation at Mr. Plaskwith's, and Mrs. Morton's health was so decidedly worse, that she resolved to know her fate, and consult a physician. The oracle was at first ambiguous in its response. But when Mrs. Morton said firmly, "I have duties to perform; upon your candid answer rest my plans with respect to my children, left, if I die suddenly, destitute in the world,"—the doctor looked hard in her face, saw its calm resolution, and replied frankly, —

"Lose no time, then, in arranging your plans; life is uncertain with all — with you, especially; you may live some time yet, but your constitution is much shaken; I fear there is water on the chest. No, ma'am, no fee. I will see you again."

The physician turned to Sidney, who played with his watch-chain, and smiled up in his face.

"And that child, sir?" said the mother, wistfully, forgetting the dread fiat pronounced against herself, — "he is so delicate!"

"Not at all, ma'am, — a very fine little fellow;" and the doctor patted the boy's head, and abruptly vanished.

"Ah, Mamma, I wish you would ride; I wish you would take the white pony!"

"Poor boy! poor boy!" muttered the mother; "I must not be selfish." She covered her face with her hands, and began to think!

Could she, thus doomed, resolve on declining her brother's offer? Did it not at least secure bread and shelter to her child? When she was dead, might not a tie between the uncle and nephew be snapped asunder? Would he be as kind to the boy as now, when she could commend him with her own lips to his care, when she could place that precious charge into his hands? With these thoughts, she formed one of those resolutions which have all the strength of self-sacrificing love. She would put the boy from her, her last solace and comfort; she would die alone, — alone!

CHAPTER VIII.

Constance. When I shall meet him in the court of heaven,
I shall not know him. — *King John.*

ONE evening, the shop closed and the business done, Mr. Roger Morton and his family sat in that snug and comfortable retreat which generally backs the warerooms of an English tradesman. Happy often, and indeed happy, is that little sanctuary, near to and yet remote from the toil and care of the busy mart from which its homely ease and peaceful security are drawn. Glance down those rows of silenced shops in a town at night, and picture the glad and quiet groups gathered within over that nightly and social meal which custom has banished from the more indolent tribes who neither toil nor spin. Placed between the two extremes of life, the tradesman who ventures not beyond his means and sees clear books and sure gains, with enough of occupation to give healthful excitement, enough of fortune to greet each newborn child without a sigh, might be envied alike by those above and those below his state — if the restless heart of man ever envied Content!

"And so the little boy is not to come?" said Mrs. Morton, as she crossed her knife and fork and pushed away her plate, in token that she had done supper.

"I don't know. Children, go to bed; there, there, that will do! Good night! Catherine does not say either yes or no. She wants time to consider."

"It was a very handsome offer on our part; some folks never know when they are well off."

"That is very true, my dear, and you are a very sensible person. Kate herself might have been an honest woman, and, what is more, a very rich woman, by this time. She might have married Spencer, the young brewer, — an excellent man, and well to do!"

"Spencer! I don't remember him."

"No? after she went off, he retired from business and left the place. I don't know what's become of him. He was mightily taken with her, to be sure. She was uncommonly handsome, my sister Catherine."

"Handsome is as handsome does, Mr. Morton," said the wife, who was very much marked with the small-pox. "We all have our temptations and trials; this is a vale of tears, and without grace we are whited sepulchres."

Mr. Morton mixed his brandy and water, and moved his chair into its customary corner.

"You saw your brother's letter," said he, after a pause; "he gives young Philip a very good character."

"The human heart is very deceitful," replied Mrs. Morton, who, by the way, spoke through her nose. "Pray Heaven he may be what he seems; but what's bred in the bone comes out in the flesh."

"We must hope the best," said Mr. Morton, mildly; "and — put another lump into the grog, my dear."

"It is a mercy, I'm thinking, that we didn't have the other little boy. I dare say he has never even been taught his catechism, — them people don't know what it is to be a mother. And besides, it would have been very awkward, Mr. M.; we could never have said who he was, and I've no doubt Miss Pryinall would have been very curious."

"Miss Pryinall be —" Mr. Morton checked himself, took a large draught of the brandy and water, and added, "Miss Pryinall wants to have a finger in everybody's pie."

"But she buys a deal of flannel, and does great good to the town; it was she who found out that Mrs. Giles was no better than she should be."

"Poor Mrs. Giles! she came to the workhouse."

"Poor Mrs. Giles, indeed! I wonder, Mr. Morton, that you, a married man with a family, should say, *poor* Mrs. Giles!"

"My dear, when people who have been well off come to the workhouse, they may be called poor, — but that's neither here nor there; only, if the boy does come to us, we must look sharp upon Miss Pryinall."

"I hope he won't come, — it will be very unpleasant. And when a man has a wife and family, the less he meddles with other folks and their little ones the better; for as the Scripture says, 'A man shall cleave to his wife and —'"

Here a sharp, shrill ring at the bell was heard, and Mrs. Morton broke off into —

"Well, I declare! at this hour! who can that be? And all gone to bed! Do go and see, Mr. Morton."

Somewhat reluctantly and slowly Mr. Morton rose; and proceeding to the passage, unbarred the door. A brief and muttered conversation followed, to the great irritability of Mrs. Morton, who stood in the passage, the candle in her hand.

"What is the matter, Mr. M.?"

Mr. Morton turned back, looking agitated.

"Where's my hat? oh, here. My sister is come, at the inn."

"Gracious me! She does not go for to say she is *your* sister?"

"No, no: here's her note, — calls herself a lady that's ill. I shall be back soon."

"She can't come here; she sha'n't come here, Mr. M. I'm an honest woman; she can't come here. You understand —"

Mr. Morton had naturally a stern countenance, stern to every one but his wife. The shrill tone to which he was so long accustomed jarred then on his heart as well as his ear. He frowned.

"Pshaw! woman, you have no feeling!" said he, and walked out of the house, pulling his hat over his brows.

That was the only rude speech Mr. Morton had ever made to his better half. She treasured it up in her heart and memory; it was associated with the sister and the child, — and she was not a woman who ever forgave.

Mr. Morton walked rapidly through the still, moon-lit streets till he reached the inn. A club was held that night in one of the rooms below; and as he crossed the threshold, the sound of "hip, hip, hurrah!" mingled with the stamping of feet and the jingling of glasses, saluted his entrance. He

was a stiff, sober, respectable man, — a man, who except at elections — he was a great politician — mixed in none of the revels of his more boisterous townsmen. The sounds, the spot, were ungenial to him. He paused, and the colour of shame rose to his brow. He was ashamed to be there, ashamed to meet the desolate and as he believed erring sister.

A pretty maid-servant, heated and flushed with orders and compliments, crossed his path with a tray full of glasses.

"There's a lady come by the Telegraph?"

"Yes, sir, upstairs, No. 2, Mr. Morton."

Mr. Morton! He shrank at the sound of his own name. "My wife's right," he muttered. "After all, this is more unpleasant than I thought for."

The slight stairs shook under his hasty tread. He opened the door of No. 2, and that Catherine, whom he had last seen at her age of gay sixteen, radiant with bloom, and but for her air of pride the model for a Hebe; that Catherine, old ere youth was gone, pale, faded, the dark hair silvered over, the cheeks hollow, and the eye dim, — that Catherine fell upon his breast!

"God bless you, brother! How kind to come! How long since we have met!"

"Sit down, Catherine, my dear sister. You are faint; you are very much changed, — very. I should not have known you."

"Brother, I have brought my boy; it is painful to part from him; very, very painful; but it is right, and God's will be done." She turned as she spoke towards a little, deformed, rickety dwarf of a sofa, that seemed to hide itself in the darkest corner of the low, gloomy room; and Morton followed her. With one hand she removed the shawl that she had thrown over the child, and placing the forefinger of the other upon her lips — lips that smiled *then* — she whispered, "We will not wake him, he is so tired; but I would not put him to bed till you had seen him."

And there slept poor Sidney, his fair cheek pillowed on his arm; the soft, silky ringlets thrown from the delicate and

unclouded brow; the natural bloom increased by warmth and travel; the lovely face so innocent and hushed; the breathing so gentle and regular, as if never broken by a sigh.

Mr. Morton drew his hand across his eyes.

There was something very touching in the contrast between that wakeful, anxious, forlorn woman and the slumber of the unconscious boy; and in that moment, what breast upon which the light of Christian pity, of natural affection, had ever dawned, would, even supposing the world's judgment were true, have recalled Catherine's reputed error? There is so divine a holiness in the love of a mother, that, no matter how the tie that binds her to the child was formed, she becomes as it were consecrated and sacred, and the past is forgotten and the world and its harsh verdict swept away, when *that* love alone is visible; and the God who watches over the little one sheds His smile over the human deputy, in whose tenderness there breathes His own!

"You will be kind to him, will you not?" said Mrs. Morton; and the appeal was made with that trustful, almost cheerful tone which implies, "Who would not be kind to a thing so fair and helpless?" "He is very sensitive and very docile; you will never have occasion to say a hard word to him, never! You have children of your own, brother!"

"He is a beautiful boy, beautiful. I will be a father to him!"

As he spoke, the recollection of his wife — sour, querulous, austere — came over him; but he said to himself, "She must take to such a child, — women always take to beauty."

He bent down and gently pressed his lips to Sidney's forehead. Mrs. Morton replaced the shawl, and drew her brother to the other end of the room.

"And now," she said, colouring as she spoke, "I must see your wife, brother; there is so much to say about a child that only a woman will recollect. Is she very good-tempered and kind, your wife? You know I never saw her; you married after — after I left."

"She is a very worthy woman," said Mr. Morton, clearing his throat, "and brought me some money. She has a will of

her own, as most women have; but that's neither here nor there. She is a good wife as wives go; and prudent and painstaking, — I don't know what I should do without her."

"Brother, I have one favour to request, — a great favour."

"Anything I can do in the way of money?"

"It has nothing to do with money. I can't live long, — don't shake your head, — I can't live long. I have no fear for Philip, he has so much spirit, such strength of character; but *that child*! I cannot bear to leave him altogether. Let me stay in this town — I can lodge anywhere; but to see him sometimes, to know I shall be in reach if he is ill — let me stay here, let me die here!"

"You must not talk so sadly. You are young yet, — younger than I am; I don't think of dying."

"Heaven forbid! but —"

"Well, well," interrupted Mr. Morton, who began to fear his feelings would hurry him into some promise which his wife would not suffer him to keep; "you shall talk to Margaret, — that is, Mrs. Morton; I will get her to see you, — yes, I think I can contrive that; and if you can arrange with her to stay — but you see, as she brought the money, and is a very particular woman —"

"I will see her; thank you, thank you; she cannot refuse me.

"And, brother," resumed Mrs. Morton, after a short pause, and speaking in a firm voice, "and is it possible that you disbelieve my story; that you, like all the rest, consider my children the sons of shame?"

There was an honest earnestness in Catherine's voice as she spoke that might have convinced many; but Mr. Morton was a man of facts, a practical man, — a man who believed that law was always right, and that the improbable was never true.

He looked down as he answered, "I think you have been a very ill-used woman, Catherine, and that is all I can say on the matter; let us drop the subject."

"No! I was not ill-used; my husband — yes, my husband — was noble and generous from first to last. It was for the sake of his children's prospects, for the expectations they,

through him, might derive from his proud uncle, that he concealed our marriage. Do not blame Philip; do not condemn the dead."

"I don't want to blame any one," said Mr. Morton, rather angrily. "I am a plain man, a tradesman, and can only go by what in my class seems fair and honest, which I can't think Mr. Beaufort's conduct was, put it how you will. If he marries you as you think, he gets rid of a witness, he destroys a certificate, and he dies without a will. However, all that's neither here nor there. You do quite right not to take the name of Beaufort, since it is an uncommon name, and would always make the story public. Least said, soonest mended. You must always consider that your children will be called natural children, and have their own way to make. No harm in that! Warm day for your journey." Catherine sighed, and wiped her eyes; she no longer reproached the world since the son of her own mother disbelieved her.

The relations talked together for some minutes on the past, the present; but there was embarrassment and constraint on both sides, — it was so difficult to avoid one subject, — and after sixteen years of absence, there is little left in common, even between those who once played together round their parents' knees. Mr. Morton was glad at last to find an excuse in Catherine's fatigue to leave her. "Cheer up, and take a glass of something warm before you go to bed. Good night!" — these were his parting words.

Long was the conference, and sleepless the couch, of Mr. and Mrs. Morton. At first that estimable lady positively declared she would not and could not visit Catherine (as to receiving her, that was out of the question); but she secretly resolved to give up that point in order to insist with greater strength upon another, — namely, the impossibility of Catherine remaining in the town, — such concession for the purpose of resistance being a very common and sagacious policy with married ladies. Accordingly, when suddenly, and with a good grace, Mrs. Morton appeared affected by her husband's eloquence, and said, "Well, poor thing! if she is so ill, and you wish it so much, I will call to-morrow," Mr. Morton felt his

heart softened towards the many excellent reasons which his wife urged against allowing Catherine to reside in the town. He was a political character; he had many enemies; the story of his seduced sister, now forgotten, would certainly be raked up; it would affect his comfort, perhaps his trade, certainly his eldest daughter, who was now thirteen; it would be impossible then to adopt the plan hitherto resolved upon, — of passing off Sidney as the legitimate orphan of a distant relation; it would be made a great handle for gossip by Miss Prynnall. Added to all these reasons, one not less strong occurred to Mr. Morton himself, — the uncommon and merciless rigidity of his wife would render all the other women in the town very glad of any topic that would humble her own sense of immaculate propriety. Moreover, he saw that if Catherine did remain, it would be a perpetual source of irritation in his own home; he was a man who liked an easy life, and avoided as far as possible all food for domestic worry. And thus, when at length the wedded pair turned back to back and composed themselves to sleep, the conditions of peace were settled, and the weaker party, as usual in diplomacy, sacrificed to the interests of the united powers.

After breakfast the next morning, Mrs. Morton sallied out on her husband's arm. Mr. Morton was rather a handsome man, with an air and look grave, composed, severe, that had tended much to raise his character in the town.

Mrs. Morton was short, wiry, and bony. She had won her husband by making desperate love to him, to say nothing of a dower that enabled him to extend his business, new-front as well as new-stock his shop, and rise into the very first rank of tradesmen in his native town. He still believed that she was excessively fond of him, — a common delusion of husbands, especially when henpecked. Mrs. Morton *was*, perhaps, fond of him in her own way; for though her heart was not warm, there may be a great deal of fondness with very little feeling. The worthy lady was now clothed in her best. She had a proper pride in showing the rewards that belong to female virtue. Flowers adorned her Leghorn bonnet, and her green silk gown boasted four flounces, — such, then, was, I am told,

the fashion. She wore also a very handsome black shawl, extremely heavy, though the day was oppressively hot, and with a deep border; a smart *séigné* brooch of yellow topazes glittered in her breast; a huge gilt serpent glared from her waistband; her hair, or more properly speaking her *front*, was tortured into very tight curls, and her feet into very tight half-laced boots, from which the fragrance of new leather had not yet departed. It was this last infliction, for *il faut souffrir pour être belle*, which somewhat yet more acerbated the ordinary acid of Mrs. Morton's temper. The sweetest disposition is ruffled when the shoe pinches; and it so happened that Mrs. Roger Morton was one of those ladies who always have chilblains in the winter and corns in the summer.

"So you say your sister is a beauty?"

"Was a beauty, Mrs. M., — *was* a beauty. People alter."

"A bad conscience, Mr. Morton, is —"

"My dear, can't you walk faster?"

"It you had my corns, Mr. Morton, you would not talk in that way!"

The happy pair sank into silence, only broken by sundry "How d'ye dos?" and "Good mornings!" interchanged with their friends, till they arrived at the inn.

"Let us go up quickly," said Mrs Morton.

And quiet, quiet to gloom, did the inn, so noisy over-night, seem by morning, — the shutters partially closed to keep out the sun, the taproom deserted, the passage smelling of stale smoke; an elderly dog, lazily snapping at the flies, at the foot of the staircase; not a soul to be seen at the bar. The husband and wife, glad to be unobserved, crept on tiptoe up the stairs, and entered Catherine's apartment.

Catherine was seated on the sofa, and Sidney — dressed, like Mrs. Roger Morton, to look his prettiest, nor yet aware of the change that awaited his destiny, but pleased at the excitement of seeing new friends, as handsome children sure of praise and petting usually are — stood by her side.

"My wife, Catherine," said Mr. Morton. Catherine rose eagerly, and gazed searchingly on her sister-in-law's hard face. She swallowed the convulsive rising at her heart as she

gazed, and stretched out both her hands, not so much to welcome as to plead. Mrs. Roger Morton drew herself up, and then dropped a courtesy, — it was an involuntary piece of good breeding; it was extorted by the noble countenance, the matronly mien of Catherine, different from what she had anticipated, — she dropped the courtesy, and Catherine took her hand and pressed it.

"This is my son;" she turned away her head. Sidney advanced towards his protectress who was to be, and Mrs. Roger muttered, —

"Come here, my dear! A fine little boy!"

"As fine a child as ever I saw!" said Mr. Morton, heartily, as he took Sidney on his lap, and stroked down his golden hair.

This displeased Mrs. Roger Morton, but she sat herself down, and said it was "very warm."

"Now go to that lady, my dear," said Mr. Morton. "Is she not a very nice lady; don't you think you shall like her very much?"

Sidney, the best-mannered child in the world, went boldly up to Mrs. Morton, as he was bid. Mrs. Morton was embarrassed. Some folks are so with other folks' children: a child either removes all constraint from a party, or it increases the constraint tenfold. Mrs. Morton, however, forced a smile, and said, "I have a little boy at home about your age."

"Have you?" exclaimed Catherine, eagerly; and as if that confession made them friends at once, she drew a chair close to her sister-in-law's. "My brother has told you all?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And I shall stay here, in the town somewhere, and see him sometimes?"

Mrs. Roger Morton glanced at her husband, her husband glanced at the door, and Catherine's quick eye turned from one to the other.

"Mr. Morton will explain, ma'am," said the wife.

"E-hem! Catherine, my dear, I am afraid *that* is out of the question," began Mr. Morton, who, when fairly put to it, could be businesslike enough. "You see by-gones are by-gones,

and it is no use raking them up; but many people in the town will recollect you."

"No one will see me, — no one, but you and Sidney."

"It will be sure to creep out; won't it, Mrs. Morton?"

"Quite sure. Indeed, ma'am, it is impossible. Mr. Morton is so very respectable, and his neighbours pay so much attention to all he does; and then, if we have an election in the autumn, you see, ma'am, he has a great stake in the place, and is a public character."

"That's neither here nor there," said Mr. Morton. "But I say, Catherine, can your little boy go into the other room for a moment? Margaret, suppose you take him and make friends."

Delighted to throw on her husband the burden of explanation, which she had originally meant to have all the importance of giving herself in her most proper and patronizing manner, Mrs. Morton twisted her fingers into the boy's hand, and opening the door that communicated with the bedroom, left the brother and sister alone; and then Mr. Morton, with more tact and delicacy than might have been expected from him, began to soften to Catherine the hardship of the separation he urged. He dwelt principally on what was best for the child. Boys were so brutal in their intercourse with each other. He had even thought it better to represent Philip to Mr. Plaskwith as a more distant relation than he was; and he begged, by the by, that Catherine would tell Philip to take the hint. But as for Sidney, sooner or later, *he* would go to a day-school, have companions of his own age; if his birth were known, he would be exposed to many mortifications, — so much better, and so very easy, to bring him up as the lawful, that is the *legal*, offspring of some distant relation.

"And," cried poor Catherine, clasping her hands, "when I am dead, is he never to know that I was his mother?"

The anguish of that question thrilled the heart of the listener. He was affected below all the surface that worldly thoughts and habits had laid, stratum by stratum, over the humanities within. He threw his arms round Catherine, and strained her to his breast.

"No, my sister, my poor sister, he shall know it when he is old enough to understand, and to keep his own secret. He shall know, too, how we all loved and prized you once; how young you were, how flattered and tempted; how you were deceived, for I know *that*, — on my soul I do! — I know it was not your fault. He shall know, too, how fondly you loved your child, and how you sacrificed, for his sake, the very comfort of being near him. He shall know it all, all!"

"My brother, my brother, I resign him; I am content. God reward you. I will go, — go quickly. I know you will take care of him now."

"And you see," resumed Mr. Morton, re-settling himself, and wiping his eyes, "it is best, between you and me, that Mrs. Morton should have her own way in this. She is a very good woman, very; but it's prudent not to vex her. You may come in now, Mrs. Morton."

Mrs. Morton and Sidney reappeared.

"We have settled it all," said the husband. "When can we have him?"

"Not to-day," said Mrs. Roger Morton; "you see, ma'am, we must get his bed ready, and his sheets well aired. I am very particular."

"Certainly, certainly. Will he sleep alone? — pardon me."

"He shall have a room to himself," said Mr. Morton. "Eh, my dear? Next to Martha's. Martha is our parlour-maid, — very good-natured girl, and fond of children."

Mrs. Morton looked grave, thought a moment, and said, "Yes, he can have that room."

"Who can have that room?" asked Sidney, innocently.

"You, my dear," replied Mr. Morton.

"And where will Mamma sleep? I must sleep near Mamma."

"Mamma is going away," said Catherine, in a firm voice, in which the despair would only have been felt by the acute ear of sympathy, — "going away for a little time; but this gentleman and lady will be very — very kind to you."

"We will do our best, ma'am," said Mrs. Morton.

And as she spoke, a sudden light broke on the boy's mind;

he uttered a loud cry, broke from his aunt, rushed to his mother's breast, and hid his face there, sobbing bitterly.

"I am afraid he has been very much spoiled," whispered Mrs. Roger Morton. "I don't think we need stay longer, — it will look suspicious. Good morning, ma'am; we shall be ready to-morrow."

"Good-by, Catherine," said Mr. Morton; and he added, as he kissed her, "be of good heart; I will come up by myself and spend the evening with you."

It was the night after this interview. Sidney had gone to his new home; they had all been kind to him, — Mr. Morton, the children, Martha the parlour-maid. Mrs. Roger herself had given him a large slice of bread and jam, but had looked gloomy all the rest of the evening, because, like a dog in a strange place, he refused to eat. His little heart was full, and his eyes, swimming with tears, were turned at every moment to the door; but he did not show the violent grief that might have been expected. His very desolation, amidst the unfamiliar faces, awed and chilled him. But when Martha took him to bed and undressed him, and he knelt down to say his prayers, and came to the words, "Pray God bless dear Mamma, and make me a good child," his heart could contain its load no longer, and he sobbed with a passion that alarmed the good-natured servant. She had been used, however, to children, and she soothed and caressed him, and told him of all the nice things he would do, and the nice toys he would have; and at last, silenced if not convinced, his eyes closed, and, the tears yet wet on their lashes, he fell asleep.

It had been arranged that Catherine should return home that night by a late coach, which left the town at twelve. It was already past eleven. Mrs. Morton had retired to bed; and her husband, who had, according to his wont, lingered behind to smoke a cigar over his last glass of brandy and water, had just thrown aside the stump and was winding up his watch, when he heard a low tap at his window. He stood mute and alarmed, for the window opened on a back lane, dark and solitary at night, and from the heat of the weather the iron-cased shutter was not yet closed; the sound was

repeated, and he heard a faint voice. He glanced at the poker, and then cautiously moved to the window, and looked forth. "Who's there?"

"It is I, it is Catherine! I cannot go without seeing my boy. I must see him, I must, once more!"

"My dear sister, the place is shut up; it is impossible. God bless me, if Mrs. Morton should hear you!"

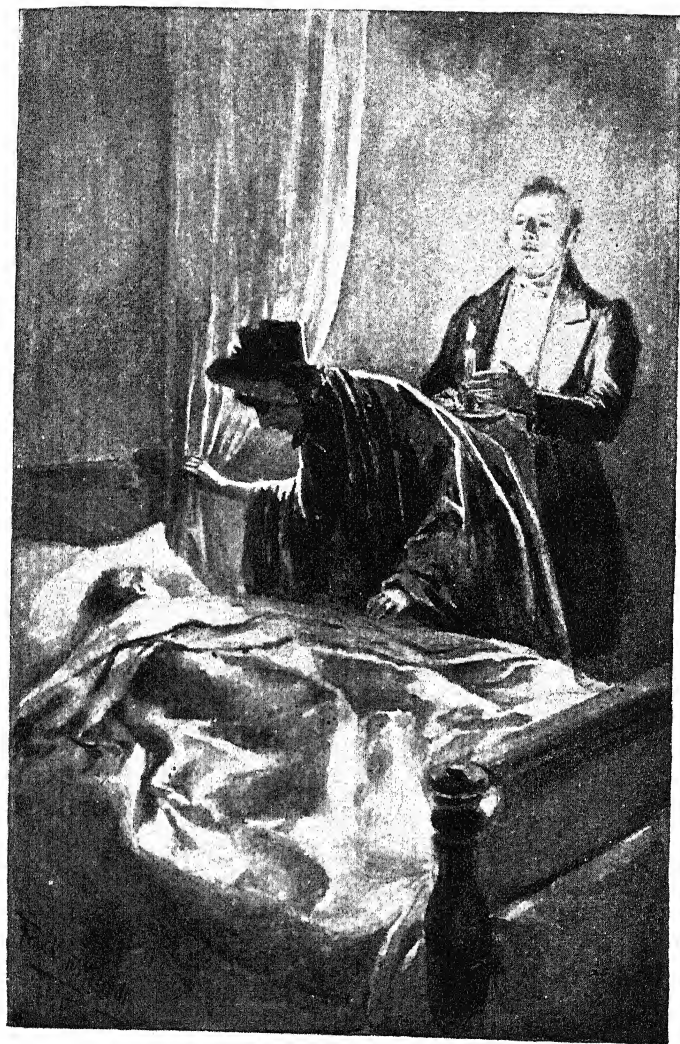
"I have walked before this window for hours; I have waited till all is hushed in your house, till no one, not even a menial, need see the mother stealing to the bed of her child. Brother, by the memory of our own mother, I command you to let me look for the last time upon my boy's face!"

As Catherine said this, standing in that lonely street, — darkness and solitude below, God and the stars above, — there was about her a majesty which awed the listener. Though she was so near, her features were not very clearly visible; but her attitude, her hand raised aloft, the outline of her wasted, but still commanding, form, were more impressive from the shadowy dimness of the air.

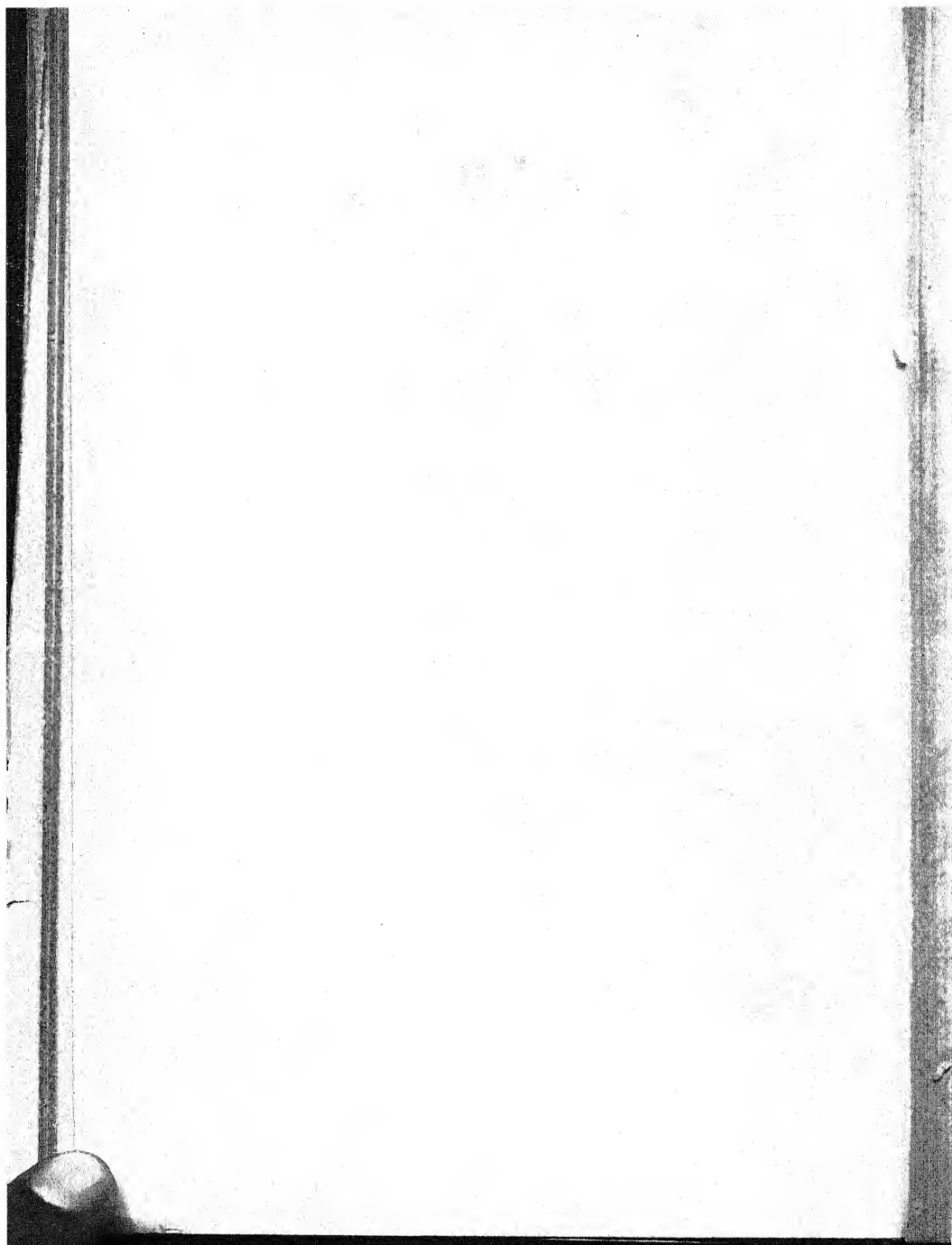
"Come round, Catherine," said Mr. Morton, after a pause; "I will admit you."

He shut the window, stole to the door, unbarred it gently, and admitted his visitor. He bade her follow him; and, shading the light with his hand, crept up the stairs. Catherine's step made no sound.

They passed, unmolested and unheard, the room in which the wife was drowsily reading, according to her custom before she tied her nightcap and got into bed, a chapter in some pious book. They ascended to the chamber where Sidney lay; Morton opened the door cautiously, and stood at the threshold, so holding the candle that its light might not wake the child, though it sufficed to guide Catherine to the bed. The room was small, perhaps close, but scrupulously clean; for cleanliness was Mrs. Roger Morton's capital virtue. The mother with a tremulous hand drew aside the white curtains, and checked her sobs as she gazed on the young quiet face that was turned towards her. She gazed some moments in passionate silence. Who shall say, beneath that silence, what



"THE MOTHER WITH A TREMULOUS HAND DREW ASIDE THE
WHITE CURTAINS."



thoughts, what prayers moved and stirred! Then bending down, with pale, convulsive lips she kissed the little hands thrown so listlessly on the coverlet of the pillow on which the head lay. After this she turned her face to her brother with a mute appeal in her glance, took a ring from her finger, — a ring that had never till then left it, — the ring which Philip Beaufort had placed there the day after that child was born. "Let him wear this round his neck," said she, and stopped, lest she should sob aloud and disturb the boy. In that gift she felt as if she invoked the father's spirit to watch over the friendless orphan; and then, pressing together her own hands firmly, as we do in some paroxysm of great pain, she turned from the room, descended the stairs, gained the street, and muttered to her brother, "I am happy now; peace be on these thresholds!" Before he could answer she was gone.

CHAPTER IX.

THUS things are strangely wrought,
While joyful May doth last;
Take May in time; when May is gone
The pleasant time is past. — RICHARD EDWARDS.
From the Paradise of Dainty Devices.

It was that period of the year when, to those who look on the surface of society, London wears its most radiant smile; when shops are gayest, and trade most brisk; when down the thoroughfares roll and glitter the countless streams of indolent and voluptuous life; when the upper class spend, and the middle class make; when the ballroom is the Market of Beauty, and the clubhouse the School for Scandal; when the hells yawn for their prey, and opera-singers and fiddlers — creatures hatched from gold, as the dung-flies from the dung — swarm and buzz and fatten round the hide of the gentle Public. In the cant phrase, it was "the London season."

And happy, take it altogether, happy above the rest of the year, even for the hapless, is that period of ferment and fever. It is not the season for duns, and the debtor glides about with a less anxious eye; and the weather is warm, and the vagrant sleeps, unfrozen, under the starlit portico; and the beggar thrives, and the thief rejoices, — for the rankness of the civilization has superfluities clutched by all. And out of the general corruption things sordid and things miserable crawl forth to bask in the common sunshine, — things that perish when the first autumn-winds whistle along the melancholy city. It is the gay time for the heir and the beauty, and the statesman and the lawyer, and the mother with her young daughters, and the artist with his fresh pictures, and the poet with his new book; it is the gay time, too, for the starved journeyman, and the ragged outcast that with long stride and patient eyes follows, for pence, the equestrian, who bids him go and be d—d in vain; it is a gay time for the painted harlot in a crimson pelisse; and a gay time for the old hag that loiters about the thresholds of the gin-shop, to buy back in a draught the dreams of departed youth. It is gay, in fine, as the fulness of a vast city is ever gay, — for Vice as for Innocence, for Poverty as for Wealth; and the wheels of every single destiny wheel on the merrier, no matter whether they are bound to heaven or to hell.

Arthur Beaufort, the young heir, was at his father's house. He was fresh from Oxford, where he had already discovered that learning is *not* better than house and land. Since the new prospects opened to him, Arthur Beaufort was greatly changed. Naturally studious and prudent, had his fortunes remained what they had been before his uncle's death, he would probably have become a labourious and distinguished man; but though his abilities were good, he had not those restless impulses which belong to Genius, — often not only its glory but its curse. The Golden Rod cast his energies asleep at once. Good-natured to a fault, and somewhat vacillating in character, he adopted the manner and the code of the rich young idlers who were his equals at College. He became, like them, careless, extravagant, and fond of pleasure. This

change, if it deteriorated his mind, improved his exterior. It was a change that could not but please women; and of all women his mother the most. Mrs. Beaufort was a lady of high birth, and in marrying her, Robert had hoped much from the interest of her connections; but a change in the Ministry had thrown her relations out of power; and, beyond her dowry, he obtained no worldly advantage with the lady of his mercenary choice. Mrs. Beaufort was a woman whom a word or two will describe. She was thoroughly commonplace, — neither bad nor good, neither clever nor silly. She was what is called well-bred; that is, languid, silent, perfectly dressed, and insipid. Of her two children, Arthur was almost the exclusive favourite, especially after he became the heir to such brilliant fortunes; for she was so much the mechanical creature of the world, that even her affection was warm or cold in proportion as the world shone on it. Without being absolutely in love with her husband, she liked him, — they suited each other; and (in spite of all the temptations that had beset her in their earlier years, for she had been esteemed a beauty, and lived, as worldly people must do, in circles where examples of unpunished gallantry are numerous and contagious) her conduct had ever been scrupulously correct. She had little or no feeling for misfortunes with which she had never come into contact; for those with which she had, — such as the distresses of younger sons, or the errors of fashionable women, or the disappointments of “a proper ambition,” — she had more sympathy than might have been supposed, and touched on them with all the tact of well-bred charity and ladylike forbearance. Thus, though she was regarded as a strict person in point of moral decorum, yet in society she was popular, — as women at once pretty and inoffensive generally are.

To do Mrs. Beaufort justice, she had not been privy to the letter her husband wrote to Catherine, although not wholly innocent of it. The fact is, that Robert had never mentioned to her the peculiar circumstances that made Catherine an exception from ordinary rules, — the generous propositions of his brother to him the night before his death; and, whatever

his incredulity as to the alleged private marriage, the perfect loyalty and faith that Catherine had borne to the deceased. He had merely observed, "I must do something, I suppose, for that woman. She very nearly entrapped my poor brother into marrying her; and he would then, for what I know, have cut Arthur out of the estates. Still, I must do something for her, eh?"

"Yes, I think so. What was she, — very low?"

"A tradesman's daughter."

"The children should be provided for according to the rank of the mother; that's the general rule in such cases: and the mother should have about the same provision she might have looked for if she had married a tradesman and been left a widow. I dare say she was a very artful kind of person, and don't deserve anything; but it is always handsomer, in the eyes of the world, to go by the general rules people lay down as to money matters."

So spoke Mrs. Beaufort. She concluded her husband had settled the matter, and never again recurred to it. Indeed, she had never liked the late Mr. Beaufort, whom she considered *mauvais ton*.

In the breakfast-room at Mr. Beaufort's, the mother and son were seated, the former at work, the latter lounging by the window: they were not alone. In a large elbow-chair sat a middle-aged man, listening, or appearing to listen, to the prattle of a beautiful little girl, Arthur Beaufort's sister. This man was not handsome, but there was a certain elegance in his air and a certain intelligence in his countenance, which made his appearance pleasing. He had that kind of eye which is often seen with red hair, — an eye of a reddish hazel, with very long lashes; the eyebrows were dark, and clearly defined; and the short hair showed to advantage the contour of a small well-shaped head. His features were irregular; the complexion had been sanguine, but was now faded, and a yellow tinge mingled with the red. His face was more wrinkled, especially round the eyes, — which when he laughed were scarcely visible, — than is usual even in men ten years older; but his teeth were still of a dazzling whiteness; nor

was there any trace of decayed health in his countenance. He seemed one who had lived hard, but who had much yet left in the lamp wherewith to feed the wick. At the first glance he appeared slight, as he lolled listlessly in his chair, — almost fragile; but at a nearer examination you perceived that, in spite of the small extremities and delicate bones, his frame was constitutionally strong. Without being broad in the shoulders, he was exceedingly deep in the chest, — deeper than men who seemed giants by his side; and his gestures had the ease of one accustomed to an active life. He had, indeed, been celebrated in his youth for his skill in athletic exercises, but a wound received in a duel many years ago had rendered him lame for life, — a misfortune which interfered with his former habits, and was said to have soured his temper. This personage, whose position and character will be described hereafter, was Lord Lilburne, the brother of Mrs. Beaufort.

"So, Camilla," said Lord Lilburne to his niece, as carelessly, not fondly, he stroked down her glossy ringlets, "you don't like Berkeley Square as you did Gloucester Place."

"Oh, no! not half so much! You see I never walk out in the fields,¹ nor make daisy-chains at Primrose Hill. I don't know what Mamma means," added the child, in a whisper, "in saying we are better off here."

Lord Lilburne smiled, but the smile was a half sneer.

"You will know quite soon enough, Camilla; the under-standings of young ladies grow up very quickly on this side of Oxford Street. Well, Arthur, and what are your plans to-day?"

"Why," said Arthur, suppressing a yawn, "I have promised to ride out with a friend of mine to see a horse that is for sale somewhere in the suburbs."

As he spoke, Arthur rose, stretched himself, looked in the glass, and then glanced impatiently at the window.

"He ought to be here by this time."

"He! who?" said Lord Lilburne, "the horse or the other animal — I mean the friend?"

¹ Now the Regent's Park.

"The friend," answered Arthur, smiling, but colouring while he smiled, for he half suspected the quiet sneer of his uncle.

"Who is your friend, Arthur?" asked Mrs. Beaufort, looking up from her work.

"Watson, an Oxford man. By the by, I must introduce him to you."

"Watson! what Watson? what family of Watson? Some Watsons are good and some are bad," said Mrs. Beaufort, musingly.

"Then they are very unlike the rest of mankind," observed Lord Lilburne, dryly.

"Oh! *my* Watson is a very gentlemanlike person, I assure you," said Arthur, half-laughing; "and you need not be ashamed of him." Then, rather desirous of turning the conversation, he continued, "So my father will be back from Beaufort Court to-day?"

"Yes; he writes in excellent spirits. He says the rents will bear raising at least ten per cent, and that the house will not require much repair."

Here Arthur threw open the window.

"Ah, Watson! how are you? How d'ye do, Marsden? Danvers, too! that's capital! the more the merrier! I will be down in an instant. But would you not rather come in?"

"An agreeable inundation," murmured Lord Lilburne; "three at a time! he takes your house for Trinity College."

A loud, clear voice, however, declined the invitation; the horses were heard pawing without. Arthur seized his hat and whip, and glanced to his mother and uncle, smilingly. "Good-by! I shall be out till dinner. Kiss me, my pretty Milly!" And as his sister, who had run to the window, sickening for the fresh air and exercise he was about to enjoy, now turned to him wistful and mournful eyes, the kind-hearted young man took her in his arms, and whispered while he kissed her, —

"Get up early to-morrow, and we'll have such a nice walk together."

Arthur was gone. His mother's gaze had followed his young and graceful figure to the door.

"Own that he is handsome, Lilburne. May I not say more, — has he not the proper air?"

"My dear sister, your son will be rich. As for his air, he has plenty of airs, but wants graces."

"Then who could polish him like yourself?"

"Probably no one. But had I a son — which Heaven forbid! — he should not have me for his Mentor. Place a young man — go and shut the door, Camilla! — between two vices, women and gambling, if you want to polish him into the fashionable smoothness. *Entre nous*, the varnish is a little expensive!"

Mrs. Beaufort sighed. Lord Lilburne smiled. He had a strange pleasure in hurting the feelings of others. Besides, he disliked youth; in his own youth he had enjoyed so much that he grew sour when he saw the young.

Meanwhile Arthur Beaufort and his friends, careless of the warmth of the day, were laughing merrily and talking gayly, as they made for the suburb of H——.

"It is an out-of-the-way place for a horse, too," said Sir Harry Danvers.

"But I assure you," insisted Mr. Watson, earnestly, "that my groom, who is a capital judge, says it is the cleverest hack he ever mounted. It has won several trotting matches. It belonged to a sporting tradesman, now done up. The advertisement caught me."

"Well," said Arthur, gayly, "at all events the ride is delightful. What weather! You must all dine with me at Richmond to-morrow; we will row back."

"And a little chicken-hazard, at the M——, afterwards," said Mr. Marsden, who was an elder, not a better, man than the rest, — a handsome, saturnine man, who had just left Oxford, and was already known on the turf.

"Anything you please," said Arthur, making his horse curvet.

Oh, Mr. Robert Beaufort! Mr. Robert Beaufort! could your prudent, scheming, worldly heart but feel what devil's tricks

your wealth was playing with a son who if poor had been the pride of the Beauforts! On one side of our pieces of gold we see the saint trampling down the dragon. False emblem! Reverse it on the coin! In the real use of the gold, it is the dragon who tramples down the saint! But on, on! the day is bright and your companions merry; make the best of your green years, Arthur Beaufort!

The young men had just entered the suburb of H——, and were spurring on four abreast at a canter. At that time an old man, feeling his way before him with a stick, — for though not quite blind, he saw imperfectly, — was crossing the road. Arthur and his friends, in loud converse, did not observe the poor passenger. He stopped abruptly, for his ear caught the sound of danger. It was too late: Mr. Marsden's horse, hard-mouthed and high-stepping, came full against him. Mr. Marsden looked down.

"Hang these old men! *always* in the way," said he, plaintively, and in the tone of a much-injured person; and with that Mr. Marsden rode on. But the others, who were younger, who were not gamblers, who were not yet grinded down into stone by the world's wheels, — the others halted. Arthur Beaufort leaped from his horse, and the old man was already in his arms; but he was severely hurt. The blood trickled from his forehead; he complained of pain in his side and limbs.

"Lean on me, my poor fellow! I will take you home. Do you live far off?"

"Not many yards. This would not have happened if I had had my dog. Never mind, sir, go your way. It is only an old man — what of that? I wish I had my dog."

"I will join you," said Arthur to his friends; "my groom has the direction. I will just take the poor old man home, and send for a surgeon. I shall not be long."

"So like you, Beaufort, — the best fellow in the world!" said Mr. Watson, with some emotion. "And there's Marsden positively dismounted, and looking at his horse's knees as if they could be hurt! Here's a sovereign for you, my man."

"And here's another," said Sir Harry; "so that's settled.

Well, you will join us, Beaufort? You see the yard yonder. We'll wait twenty minutes for you. Come on, Watson."

The old man had not picked up the sovereigns thrown at his feet, neither had he thanked the donors; and on his countenance there was a sour, querulous, resentful expression.

"Must a man be a beggar because he is run over, or because he is half blind?" said he, turning his dim, wandering eyes painfully towards Arthur. "Well, I wish I had my dog!"

"I will supply his place," said Arthur, soothingly. "Come, lean on me, — heavier; that's right. You are not so bad, — eh?"

"Um! — the sovereigns! — it is wicked to leave them in the kennel!"

Arthur smiled. "Here they are, sir."

The old man slid the coins into his pocket, and Arthur continued to talk, though he got but short answers, and those only in the way of direction, till at last the old man stopped at the door of a small house near the churchyard.

After twice ringing the bell, the door was opened by a middle-aged woman, whose appearance was above that of a common menial, — dressed, somewhat gayly for her years, in a cap seated very far back on a black *toupet*, and decorated with red ribbons, an apron made out of an Indian silk handkerchief, a puce-coloured saracen gown, black silk stockings, long gilt earrings, and a watch at her girdle.

"Bless us and save us, sir! What *has* happened?" exclaimed this worthy personage, holding up her hands.

"Pish! I am faint; let me in. I don't want your aid any more, sir. Thank you. Good day!"

Not discouraged by this farewell, the churlish tone of which fell harmless on the invincibly sweet temper of Arthur, the young man continued to assist the sufferer along the narrow passage into a little old-fashioned parlour; and no sooner was the owner deposited on his worm-eaten leather chair than he fainted away. On reaching the house, Arthur had sent his servant (who had followed him with the horses) for the nearest surgeon; and while the woman was still employed, after taking off the sufferer's cravat, in burning feathers under his

nose, there was heard a sharp rap and a shrill ring. Arthur opened the door, and admitted a smart little man in nankeen breeches and gaiters. He bustled into the room.

"What's this — bad accident? Um, um! Sad thing, very sad. Open the window. A glass of water, a towel. So, so; I see, I see! No fracture — contusion. Help him off with his coat. Another chair, ma'am; put up his poor legs. What age is he, ma'am? Sixty-eight! Too old to bleed. Thank you. How is it, sir? Poorly, to be sure; will be comfortable presently. Faintish still? Soon put all to rights."

"Tray! Tray! Where's my dog, Mrs. Boxer?"

"Lord, sir, what do you want with your dog now? He is in the back-yard."

"And what business has my dog in the back-yard?" almost screamed the sufferer, in accents that denoted no diminution of vigour. "I thought as soon as my back was turned my dog would be ill-used! Why did I go without my dog? Let in my dog directly, Mrs. Boxer!"

"All right, you see, sir," said the apothecary, turning to Beaufort, "no cause for alarm. Very comforting that little passion — does him good; sets one's mind easy. How did it happen? Ah, I understand! knocked down. Might have been worse. Your groom (sharp fellow!) explained in a trice, sir. Thought it was my old friend here by the description. Worthy man; settled here a many year; very odd — eccentric (this in a whisper). Came off instantly; just at dinner — cold lamb and salad. 'Mrs. Perkins,' says I, 'if any one calls for me, I shall be at No. 4 Prospect Place.' Your servant observed the address, sir. Oh, very sharp fellow! See how the old gentleman takes to his dog; fine little dog; what a stump of a tail! Deal of practice; expect two accouchements every hour. Hot weather for childbirth. So says I to Mrs. Perkins, 'If Mrs. Plummer is taken, or Mrs. Everat, or if old Mr. Grub has another fit, send off at once to No. 4. Medical men should be always in the way, — that's my maxim. Now, sir, where do you feel the pain?'"

"In my ears, sir."

"Bless me, that looks bad. How long have you felt it?"

"Ever since you have been in the room."

"Oh, I take! Ha, ha! Very eccentric, very!" muttered the apothecary, a little disconcerted. "Well, let him lie down, ma'am. I'll send him a little quieting draught to be taken directly; pill at night, aperient in the morning. If wanted, send for me; always to be found. Bless me, that's my boy Bob's ring! Please to open the door, ma'am. Know his ring, — very peculiar knack of his own. Lay ten to one it is Mrs. Plummer, or perhaps, Mrs. Everat, — her ninth child in eight years; in the grocery line. A woman in a thousand, sir!"

Here a thin boy, with very short coat-sleeves and very large hands, burst into the room with his mouth open.

"Sir! Mr. Perkins! sir!"

"I know, I know, — coming. Mrs. Plummer or Mrs. Everat?"

"No, sir; it be the poor lady at Mrs. Lacy's; she be taken desperate. Mrs. Lacy's girl has just been over to the shop, and made me run here to you, sir."

"Mrs. Lacy's! oh, I know. Poor Mrs. Morton! Bad case, very bad; must be off. Keep him quiet, ma'am. Good day. Look in to-morrow, nine o'clock. Put a little lint with the lotion on the head, ma'am. Mrs. Morton! Ah, bad job that!"

Here the apothecary had shuffled himself off to the street-door, when Arthur laid his hand on his arm.

"Mrs. Morton! Did you say *Morton*, sir? What kind of a person; is she very ill?"

"Hopeless case, sir; general break-up. Nice woman, quite the lady, known better days, I'm sure."

"Has she any children, — sons?"

"Two. Both away now; fine lads! quite wrapped up in them, — youngest especially."

"Good heavens! it must be she; ill and dying and destitute, perhaps," exclaimed Arthur, with real and deep feeling; "I will go with you, sir. I fancy that I know this lady, — that," he added generously, "I am *related* to her."

"Do you? Glad to hear it. Come along then; she ought

to have some one near her besides servants. Not but what Jenny, the maid, is uncommonly kind. Dr. —, who attends her sometimes, said to me, says he, 'It is the mind, Mr. Perkins; I wish we could get back her boys.'"

"And where are they?"

"'Prenticed out, I fancy. Master Sidney —"

"Sidney!"

"Ah, that was his name, — pretty name. D'ye know Sir Sidney Smith? Extraordinary man, sir! Master Sidney was a beautiful child, quite spoiled. She always fancied him ailing, always sending for me. 'Mr. Perkins,' said she, 'there's something the matter with my child; I'm sure there is, though he won't own it. He has lost his appetite; had a headache last night.' 'Nothing the matter, ma'am,' says I; 'wish you'd think more of yourself.' These mothers are silly, anxious, poor creatures. Nater, sir, nater, — wonderful thing, nater! Here we are."

And the apothecary knocked at the private door of a milliner and hosier's shop.

CHAPTER X.

THEY child shall live, and I will see it nourished. — *Titus Andronicus*.

As might be expected, the excitement and fatigue of Catherine's journey to N—— had considerably accelerated the progress of disease; and when she reached home, and looked round the cheerless rooms all solitary, all hushed, — Sidney gone, gone from her forever, she felt indeed as if the last reed on which she had leaned was broken, and her business upon earth was done. Catherine was not condemned to absolute poverty, — the poverty which grinds and gnaws, the poverty of rags and famine. She had still left nearly half of such portion of the little capital, realized by the sale of her trinkets, as had escaped the clutch of the law; and her brother had forced into

her hands a note for £20, with an assurance that the same sum should be paid to her half-yearly. Alas! there was little chance of her needing it again! She was not, then, in want of means to procure the common comforts of life. But now a new passion had entered into her breast, — the passion of the miser; she wished to hoard every sixpence as some little provision for her children. What was the use of her feeding a lamp nearly extinguished, and which was fated to be soon broken up and cast amidst the vast lumber-house of Death? She would willingly have removed into a more homely lodging, but the servant of the house had been so fond of Sidney, so kind to *him*. She clung to one familiar face on which there seemed to live the reflection of her child's. But she relinquished the first floor for the second; and there, day by day, she felt her eyes grow heavier and heavier beneath the clouds of the last sleep. Besides the aid of Mr. Perkins, a kind enough man in his way, the good physician whom she had before consulted still attended her, and — refused his fee. Shocked at perceiving that she rejected every little alleviation of her condition, and wishing at least to procure for her last hours the society of one of her sons, he had inquired the address of the elder; and on the day preceding the one in which Arthur discovered her abode, he despatched to Philip the following letter: —

SIR, — Being called in to attend your mother in a lingering illness, which I fear may prove fatal, I think it my duty to request you to come to her as soon as you receive this. Your presence cannot but be a great comfort to her. The nature of her illness is such that it is impossible to calculate exactly how long she may be spared to you; but I am sure her fate might be prolonged, and her remaining days more happy, if she could be induced to remove into a better air and a more quiet neighbourhood, to take more generous sustenance, and, above all, if her mind could be set more at ease as to your and your brother's prospects. You must pardon me if I have seemed inquisitive; but I have sought to draw from your mother some particulars as to her family and connections, with a wish to represent to them her state of mind. She is, however, very reserved on these points. If, however, you have relations well to do in the world, I think some application to them should be made. I fear the state of her affairs weighs much upon your poor mother's mind; and I

must leave you to judge how far it can be relieved by the good feeling of any persons upon whom she may have legitimate claims. At all events, I repeat my wish that you should come to her forthwith.

I am, etc.,

After the physician had despatched this letter, a sudden and marked alteration for the worse took place in his patient's disorder; and in the visit he had paid that morning, he saw cause to fear that her hours on earth would be much fewer than he had before anticipated. He had left her, however, comparatively better; but two hours after his departure, the symptoms of her disease had become very alarming, and the good-natured servant-girl, her sole nurse, and who had, moreover, the whole business of the other lodgers to attend to, had, as we have seen, thought it necessary to summon the apothecary in the interval that must elapse before she could reach the distant part of the metropolis in which Dr. — resided.

On entering the chamber, Arthur felt all the remorse which of right belonged to his father press heavily on his soul. What a contrast, that mean and solitary chamber and its comfortless appurtenances, to the graceful and luxurious abode, where full of health and hope he had last beheld her, the mother of Philip Beaufort's children! He remained silent till Mr. Perkins, after a few questions, retired to send his drugs. He then approached the bed; Catherine, though very weak and suffering much pain, was still sensible. She turned her dim eyes on the young man, but she did not recognize his features.

"You do not remember me?" said he, in a voice struggling with tears: "I am Arthur — Arthur Beaufort."

Catherine made no answer.

"Good heavens! Why do I see you here? I believed you with your friends, your children provided for, as became my father to do. He assured me that you were so."

Still no answer.

And then the young man, overpowered with the feelings of a sympathizing and generous nature, forgetting for a while Catherine's weakness, poured forth a torrent of inquiries, regrets, and self-upbraidings, which Catherine at first little

heeded. But the name of her children repeated again and again struck upon that chord which, in a woman's heart, is the last to break; and she raised herself in her bed, and looked at her visitor wistfully.

"Your father," she said, then, — "your father was unlike my Philip; but I see things differently now. For me, all bounty is too late; but my children — to-morrow they may have no mother. The law is with you, but not justice! You will be rich and powerful; will you befriend my children?"

"Through life, so help me Heaven!" exclaimed Arthur, falling on his knees beside the bed.

What then passed between them it is needless to detail; for it was little, save broken repetitions of the same prayer and the same response. But there was so much truth and earnestness in Arthur's voice and countenance that Catherine felt as if an angel had come there to administer comfort; and when late in the day the physician entered, he found his patient leaning on the breast of her young visitor, and looking on his face with a happy smile.

The physician gathered enough from the appearance of Arthur and the gossip of Mr. Perkins to conjecture that one of the rich relations he had attributed to Catherine was arrived. Alas! for her it was now indeed too late!

CHAPTER XI.

D'ye stand amazed? — Look o'er thy head, Maximinian!
Look to the terror which overhangs thee.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Prophetess.*

PHILIP had been five weeks in his new home; in another week, he was to enter on his articles of apprenticeship. With a stern, unbending gloom of manner, he had commenced the duties of his novitiate. He submitted to all that was enjoined

him. He seemed to have lost forever the wild and unruly waywardness that had stamped his boyhood; but he was never seen to smile; he scarcely ever opened his lips. His very soul seemed to have quitted him with its faults; and he performed all the functions of his situation with the quiet listless regularity of a machine. Only when the work was done and the shop closed, instead of joining the family circle in the back parlour, he would stroll out in the dusk of the evening, away from the town, and not return till the hour at which the family retired to rest. Punctual in all he did, he never exceeded that hour. He had heard once a week from his mother; and only on the mornings in which he expected a letter did he seem restless and agitated. Till the postman entered the shop, he was as pale as death, his hands trembling, his lips compressed. When he read the letter he became composed, for Catherine sedulously concealed from her son the state of her health; she wrote cheerfully, besought him to content himself with the state into which he had fallen, and expressed her joy that in his letters he intimated that content, — for the poor boy's letters were not less considerate than her own. On her return from her brother, she had so far silenced or concealed her misgivings as to express satisfaction at the home she had provided for Sidney; and she even held out hopes of some future when, their probation finished and their independence secured, she might reside with her sons alternately. These hopes redoubled Philip's assiduity, and he saved every shilling of his weekly stipend; and sighed as he thought that in another week his term of apprenticeship would commence and the stipend cease.

Mr. Plaskwith could not but be pleased on the whole with the diligence of his assistant, but he was chafed and irritated by the sullenness of his manner. As for Mrs. Plaskwith, poor woman! she positively detested the taciturn and moody boy, who never mingled in the jokes of the circle, nor played with the children, nor complimented her, nor added, in short, anything to the sociability of the house. Mr. Plimmins, who had at first sought to condescend, next sought to bully; but the gaunt frame and savage eye of Philip awed the smirk youth,

in spite of himself; and he confessed to Mrs. Plaskwith that he should not like to meet "the gypsy" alone on a dark night, — to which Mrs. Plaskwith replied, as usual, "that Mr. Plimmins always *did* say the best things in the world!"

One morning, Philip was sent a few miles into the country, to assist in cataloguing some books in the library of Sir Thomas Champerdown, — that gentleman, who was a scholar, having requested that some one acquainted with the Greek character might be sent to him, and Philip being the only one in the shop who possessed such knowledge.

It was evening before he returned. Mr. and Mrs. Plaskwith were both in the shop as he entered; in fact, they had been employed in talking him over.

"I can't abide him!" cried Mrs. Plaskwith. "If you choose to take him for good, I sha' n't have an easy moment. I'm sure the 'prentice that cut his master's throat at Chatham, last week, was just like him."

"Pshaw! Mrs. P.," said the bookseller, taking a huge pinch of snuff, as usual, from his waistcoat pocket. "I myself was reserved when I was young; all reflective people are. I may observe, by the by, that it was the case with Napoleon Buonaparte; still, however, I must own he is a disagreeable youth, though he attends to his business."

"And how fond of money he is!" remarked Mrs. Plaskwith; "he won't buy himself a new pair of shoes! — quite disgraceful! And did you see what a look he gave Plimmins when he joked about his indifference to his *sole*? Plimmins always does say such good things!"

"He is shabby, certainly," said the bookseller; "but the value of a book does not always depend on the binding."

"I hope he is honest!" observed Mrs. Plaskwith. And here Philip entered.

"Hum," said Mr. Plaskwith, "you have had a long day's work; but I suppose it will take a week to finish?"

"I am to go again to-morrow morning, sir; two days more will conclude the task."

"There's a letter for you," cried Mrs. Plaskwith; "you owes me for it."

"A letter!" It was not his mother's hand; it was a strange writing. He gasped for breath as he broke the seal. It was the letter of the physician.

His mother, then, was ill, dying, wanting, perhaps, the necessaries of life. She would have concealed from him her illness and her poverty. His quick alarm exaggerated the last into utter want. He uttered a cry that rang through the shop, and rushed to Mr. Plaskwith.

"Sir, sir! my mother is dying! She is poor, poor, perhaps starving. Money, money! lend me money! ten pounds! five! I will work for you all my life for nothing, but lend me the money!"

"Hoity-toity!" said Mrs. Plaskwith, nudging her husband, "I told you what would come of it; it will be 'money or life' next time."

Philip did not heed or hear this address, but stood immediately before the bookseller, his hands clasped, wild impatience in his eyes. Mr. Plaskwith, somewhat stupefied, remained silent.

"Do you hear me? Are you human?" exclaimed Philip, his emotion revealing at once all the fire of his character. "I tell you my mother is dying; I must go to her! Shall I go empty-handed? Give me money!"

Mr. Plaskwith was not a bad-hearted man; but he was a formal man, and an irritable one. The tone his shopboy (for so he considered Philip) assumed to him before his own wife too (examples are very dangerous) rather exasperated than moved him.

"That's not the way to speak to your master; you forget yourself, young man!"

"Forget! But, sir, if she has not necessaries; if she is starving?"

"Fudge!" said Plaskwith. "Mr. Morton writes me word that he has provided for your mother! Does he not, Hannah?"

"More fool he, I'm sure, with such a fine family of his own! Don't look at me in that way, young man; I won't take it, that I won't! I declare my blood friz to see you!"

"Will you advance me money; five pounds, only five pounds, Mr. Plaskwith?"

"Not five shillings! Talk to *me* in this style! Not the man for it, sir! highly improper. Come, shut up the shop, and recollect yourself; and, perhaps, when Sir Thomas's library is done, I may let you go to town. You can't go to-morrow. All a sham, perhaps; eh, Hannah?"

"Very likely! Consult Plimmins. Better come away now, Mr. P. He looks like a young tiger."

Mrs. Plaskwith quitted the shop for the parlour. Her husband, putting his hands behind his back, and throwing back his chin, was about to follow her. Philip, who had remained for the last moment mute and white as stone, turned abruptly; and his grief taking rather the tone of rage than supplication, he threw himself before his master, and, laying his hand on his shoulder, said, —

"I leave you; do not let it be with a curse. I conjure you, have mercy on me!"

Mr. Plaskwith stopped; and had Philip then taken but a milder tone, all had been well. But, accustomed from childhood to command, all his fierce passions loose within him, despising the very man he thus implored, the boy ruined his own cause. Indignant at the silence of Mr. Plaskwith, and too blinded by his emotions to see that in that silence there was relenting, he suddenly shook the little man with a vehemence that almost upset him, and cried, —

"You, who demand for five years my bones and blood, my body and soul, a slave to your vile trade, do you deny me bread for a mother's lips?"

Trembling with anger and, perhaps, fear, Mr. Plaskwith extricated himself from the gripe of Philip, and, hurrying from the shop, said, as he banged the door, —

"Beg my pardon for this to-night, or out you go to-morrow, neck and crop! Zounds! a pretty pass the world's come to! I don't believe a word about your mother. Baugh!"

Left alone, Philip remained for some moments struggling with his wrath and agony. He then seized his hat, which he had thrown off on entering, pressed it over his brows, turned

to quit the shop, when his eye fell upon the till. Plaskwith had left it open, and the gleam of the coin struck his gaze, — that deadly smile of the arch tempter. Intellect, reason, conscience, — all in that instant were confusion and chaos. He cast a hurried glance round the solitary and darkening room, plunged his hand into the drawer, clutched he knew not what, — silver or gold, as it came uppermost, — and burst into a loud and bitter laugh. The laugh itself startled him, — it did not sound like his own. His face fell, and his knees knocked together; his hair bristled; he felt as if the very fiend had uttered that yell of joy over a fallen soul.

“No, no, no!” he muttered; “no, my mother, — not even for thee!” and dashing the money to the ground, he fled like a maniac from the house.

At a later hour that same evening, Mr. Robert Beaufort returned from his country mansion to Berkeley Square. He found his wife very uneasy and nervous about the non-appearance of their only son. Arthur had sent home his groom and horses about seven o’clock, with a hurried scroll, written in pencil on a blank page torn from his pocketbook, and containing only these words: —

“Don’t wait dinner for me; I may not be home for some hours. I have met with a melancholy adventure. You will approve what I have done when we meet.”

This note a little perplexed Mr. Beaufort; but as he was very hungry, he turned a deaf ear both to his wife’s conjectures and his own surmises till he had refreshed himself; and then he sent for the groom, and learned that, after the accident to the blind man, Mr. Arthur had been left at a hosier’s in H—. This seemed to him extremely mysterious; and as hour after hour passed away, and still Arthur came not, he began to imbibe his wife’s fears, which were now wound up almost to hysterics; and just at midnight he ordered his carriage, and taking with him the groom as a guide, set off to the suburban region. Mrs. Beaufort had wished to accompany him; but the husband observing that young men would be young men, and that there *might* possibly be a lady in the

case, Mrs. Beaufort, after a pause of thought, passively agreed that, all things considered, she had better remain at home. No lady of proper decorum likes to run the risk of finding herself in a false position. Mr. Beaufort accordingly set out alone. Easy was the carriage, swift were the steeds; and luxuriously the wealthy man was whirled along. Not a suspicion of the true cause of Arthur's detention crossed him; but he thought of the snares of London, of artful females in distress. "A melancholy adventure" generally implies love for the adventure and money for the melancholy; and Arthur was young, generous, with a heart and a pocket equally open to imposition. Such scrapes, however, do not terrify a father when he is a man of the world so much as they do an anxious mother; and with more curiosity than alarm, Mr. Beaufort, after a short doze, found himself before the shop indicated.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the door to the private entrance was ajar, — a circumstance which seemed very suspicious to Mr. Beaufort. He pushed it open with caution and timidity. A candle placed upon a chair in the narrow passage threw a sickly light over the flight of stairs, till swallowed up by the deep shadow from the sharp angle made by the ascent. Robert Beaufort stood a moment in some doubt whether to call, to knock, to recede, or to advance, when a step was heard upon the stairs above. It came nearer and nearer; a figure emerged from the shadow of the last landing-place, and Mr. Beaufort, to his great joy, recognized his son.

Arthur did not, however, seem to perceive his father, and was about to pass him, when Mr. Beaufort laid his hand on his arm.

"What means all this, Arthur? What place are you in? How you have alarmed us!"

Arthur cast a look upon his father of sadness and reproach.

"Father," he said, in a tone that sounded stern, almost commanding, "I will show you where I have been; follow me, — nay, I say, follow."

He turned, without another word re-ascended the stairs; and Mr. Beaufort, surprised and awed into mechanical obedi-

ence, did as his son desired. At the landing-place of the second floor, another long-wicked, neglected, ghastly candle emitted its cheerless ray. It gleamed through the open door of a small bedroom to the left, through which Beaufort perceived the forms of two women. One (it was the kindly maid-servant) was seated on a chair, and weeping bitterly; the other (it was a hireling nurse, in the first and last day of her attendance) was unpinning her dingy shawl before she lay down to take a nap. She turned her vacant, listless face upon the two men, put on a doleful smile, and decently closed the door.

"Where are we, I say, Arthur?" repeated Mr. Beaufort. Arthur took his father's hand, drew him into a room to the right, and taking up the candle, placed it on a small table beside a bed, and said, "Here, sir—in the presence of Death!"

Mr. Beaufort cast a hurried and fearful glance on the still, wan, serene face beneath his eyes, and recognized in that glance the features of the neglected and the once-adored Catherine.

"Yes, she, whom your brother so loved, the mother of his children, died in this squalid room, and far from her sons, in poverty, in sorrow! died of a broken heart! Was that well, Father? Have you in this nothing to repent?"

Conscience-stricken and appalled, the worldly man sank down on a seat beside the bed, and covered his face with his hands.

"Ay," continued Arthur, almost bitterly,—"ay, we, his nearest of kin, we who have inherited his lands and gold, we have been thus heedless of the great legacy your brother bequeathed to us, the things dearest to him,—the woman he loved, the children his death cast, nameless and branded, on the world. Ay, weep, Father; and while you weep, think of the future, of reparation. I have sworn to that clay to befriend her sons; join you, who have all the power to fulfil the promise, join in that vow; and may Heaven not visit on us both the woes of this bed of death!"

"I did not know—I—I—" faltered Mr. Beaufort.

"But we should have known," interrupted Arthur, mournfully. "Ah, my dear Father! do not harden your heart by false excuses. The dead still speaks to you, and commends to your care her children. My task here is done; O sir! yours is to come. I leave you alone with the dead."

So saying, the young man, whom the tragedy of the scene had worked into a passion and a dignity above his usual character, unwilling to trust himself further to his emotions, turned abruptly from the room, fled rapidly down the stairs, and left the house. As the carriage and liveries of his father met his eye, he groaned; for their evidences of comfort and wealth seemed a mockery to the deceased. He averted his face and walked on; nor did he heed or even perceive a form that at that instant rushed by him — pale, haggard, breathless — towards the house which he had quitted, and the door of which he left open, as he had found it, — open, as the physician had left it when hurrying, ten minutes before the arrival of Mr. Beaufort, from the spot where his skill was impotent. Wrapped in gloomy thought, alone, and on foot, at that dreary hour and in that remote suburb, the heir of the Beauforts sought his splendid home. Anxious, fearful, hoping, the out-cast orphan flew on to the death-room of his mother.

Mr. Beaufort, who had but imperfectly heard Arthur's parting accents, lost and bewildered by the strangeness of his situation, did not at first perceive that he was left alone. Surprised, and chilled by the sudden silence of the chamber, he rose, withdrew his hands from his face, and again he saw that countenance so mute and solemn. He cast his gaze round the dismal room for Arthur; he called his name — no answer came. A superstitious tremor seized upon him; his limbs shook; he sank once more on his seat, and closed his eyes, — muttering, for the first time, perhaps, since his childhood, words of penitence and prayer. He was roused from this bitter self-abstraction by a deep groan. It seemed to come from the bed. Did his ears deceive him? Had the dead found a voice? He started up in an agony of dread, and saw opposite to him the livid countenance of Philip Morton. The Son of the Corpse had replaced the Son of the Living Man!

The dim and solitary light fell upon that countenance. There, all the bloom and freshness natural to youth seemed blasted! There, on those wasted features, played all the terrible power and glare of precocious passions, — rage, woe, scorn, despair. Terrible is it to see upon the face of a boy the storm and whirlwind that should visit only the strong heart of man!

"She is dead! dead! and in your presence!" shouted Philip, with his wild eyes fixed upon the cowering uncle; "dead with care, perhaps with famine. And *you* have come to look upon your work!"

"Indeed," said Beaufort, deprecatingly, "I have but just arrived: I did not know she had been ill, or in want, upon my honour. This is all a — a — mistake: I — I — came in search of — of — another —"

"You did *not*, then, come to relieve her?" said Philip, very calmly. "You had not learned her suffering and distress, and flown hither in the hope that there was yet time to save her? You did not do this? Ha! ha! why did I think it?"

"Did any one call, gentlemen?" said a whining voice at the door; and the nurse put in her head.

"Yes, yes, you may come in," said Beaufort, shaking with nameless and cowardly apprehension; but Philip had flown to the door, and gazing on the nurse, said, —

"She is a stranger! see, a *stranger*! The son now has assumed his post. Begone, woman!" And he pushed her away, and drew the bolt across the door.

And then there looked upon him, as there had looked upon his reluctant companion, calm and holy, the face of the peaceful corpse. He burst into tears, and fell on his knees so close to Beaufort that he touched him; he took up the heavy hand, and covered it with burning kisses.

"Mother! Mother! do not leave me! wake, smile once more on your son! I would have brought you money, but I could not have asked for your blessing *then*; Mother, I ask it now!"

"If I had but known, if you had but written to me, my dear young gentleman; but my offers had been refused, and —"

"Offers of a hireling's pittance to her, — to her for whom my father would have coined his heart's blood into gold! My father's wife! his wife! offers —"

He rose suddenly, folded his arms, and facing Beaufort with a fierce determined brow said, —

"Mark me, you hold the wealth that I was trained from my cradle to consider my heritage. I have worked with these hands for bread, and never complained, except to my own heart and soul. I never hated, and never cursed you, robber as you were, — yes, robber! For, even were there no marriage save in the sight of God, neither my father nor Nature nor Heaven meant that you should seize all, and that there should be nothing due to the claims of affection and blood. He was not the less my father, even if the Church spoke not on my side. Despoiler of the orphan and derider of human love, you are not the less a robber, though the law fences you round and men call you honest! But I did not hate you for this. Now, in the presence of my dead mother, — dead, far from both her sons, — now I abhor and curse you. You may think yourself safe when you quit this room, — safe, and from my hatred; you may be so: but do not deceive yourself. The curse of the widow and the orphan shall pursue, it shall cling to you and yours; it shall gnaw your heart in the midst of splendour; it shall cleave to the heritage of your son! There shall be a death-bed yet, beside which you shall see the spectre of her, now so calm, rising for retribution from the grave! These words — no, you never shall forget them; years hence they shall ring in your ears, and freeze the marrow of your bones! And now begone, my father's brother, — begone from my mother's corpse to your luxurious home!"

He opened the door, and pointed to the stairs. Beaufort, without a word, turned from the room and departed. He heard the door closed and locked as he descended the stairs; but he did not hear the deep groans and vehement sobs in which the desolate orphan gave vent to the anguish which succeeded to the less sacred paroxysm of revenge and wrath.

BOOK II.

Abend ward's und wurde Morgen,
Nimmer, nimmer stand ich still.

SCHILLER : *Der Pilgrim.*

CHAPTER I.

Incubo. Look to the cavalier. What ails he ?

Hostess. And in such good clothes, too !

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER : *Love's Pilgrimage.*

Theod. I have a brother, — there my last hope !
Thus as you find me, without fear or wisdom,
I now am only child of hope and danger. — *Ibid.*

THE time employed by Mr. Beaufort in reaching his home was haunted by gloomy and confused terrors. He felt inexplicably as if the denunciations of Philip were to visit less himself than his son. He trembled at the thought of Arthur meeting this strange, wild, exasperated scatterling — perhaps on the morrow — in the very height of his passions; and yet, after the scene between Arthur and himself, he saw cause to fear that he might not be able to exercise a sufficient authority over his son, however naturally facile and obedient, to prevent his return to the house of death. In this dilemma he resolved, as is usual with cleverer men, even when yoked to yet feebler helpmates, to hear if his wife had anything comforting or sensible to say upon the subject. Accordingly, on reaching Berkeley Square, he went straight to Mrs. Beaufort; and having relieved her mind as to Arthur's safety, related the scene in which he had been so unwilling an actor. With that more lively susceptibility which belongs to most women, however

comparatively unfeeling, Mrs. Beaufort made greater allowance than her husband for the excitement Philip had betrayed. Still Beaufort's description of the dark menaces, the fierce countenance, the brigand-like form, of the bereaved son, gave her very considerable apprehensions for Arthur, should the young men meet; and she willingly coincided with her husband in the propriety of using all means of parental persuasion or command to guard against such an encounter. But, in the meanwhile, Arthur returned not, and new fears seized the anxious parents. He had gone forth alone, in a remote suburb of the metropolis, at a late hour, himself under strong excitement. He might have returned to the house, or have lost his way amidst some dark haunts of violence and crime; they knew not where to send or what to suggest. Day already began to dawn, and still he came not. At length, towards five o'clock, a loud rap was heard at the door, and Mr. Beaufort, hearing some bustle in the hall, descended. He saw his son borne into the hall from a hackney-coach by two strangers, — pale, bleeding, and apparently insensible. His first thought was that he had been murdered by Philip. He uttered a feeble cry, and sank down beside his son.

"Don't be darnted, sir," said one of the strangers, who seemed an artisan; "I don't think he be much hurt. You sees he was crossing the street, and the coach ran against him; but it did not go over his head. It be only the stones that makes him bleed so; and that's a mercy."

"A providence, sir," said the other man; "but Providence watches over us all, night and day, sleep or wake. Hem! We were passing at the time from the meeting, — the Odd Fellows, sir, — and so we took him, and got him a coach; for we found his card in his pocket. He could not speak just then; but the rattling of the coach did him a deal of good, for he groaned; my eyes! how he groaned! did he not, Burrows?"

"It did one's heart good to hear him."

"Run for Astley Cooper! you, go to Brodie! Good heavens! he is dying. Be quick, quick!" cried Mr. Beaufort to his servants, while Mrs. Beaufort, who had now gained the spot,

with greater presence of mind had Arthur conveyed into a room.

"It is a judgment upon me," groaned Beaufort, rooted to the stone of his hall, and left alone with the strangers.

"No, sir, it is not a *judgment*; it is a *providence*," said the more sanctimonious and better dressed of the two men. "For, put the question, if it had been a judgment, the wheel would have gone over him, but it did n't; and whether he dies or not, I shall always say that if that's not a providence, I don't know what is. We have come a long way, sir; and Burrows is a poor man, though I'm well to do."

This hint for money restored Beaufort to his recollection; he put his purse into the nearest hand outstretched to clutch it, and muttered forth something like thanks.

"Sir, may the Lord bless you! and I hope the young gentleman will do well. I am sure you have cause to be thankful that he was within an inch of the wheel; was he not, Burrows? Well, it's enough to convert a heathen. But the ways of Providence are mysterious, and that's the truth of it. Good night, sir."

Certainly it did seem as if the curse of Philip was already at its work. An accident almost similar to that which in the adventure of the blind man had led Arthur to the clew of Catherine, within twenty-four hours stretched Arthur himself upon his bed. The sorrow Mr. Beaufort had not relieved was now at his own hearth. But *there* were parents and nurses, and great physicians and skilful surgeons, and all the army that combine against Death; and *there* were ease and luxury, and kind eyes and pitying looks, and all that can take the sting from pain. And thus, the very night on which Catherine had died, broken down and worn out, upon a strange breast, with a feeless doctor, and by the ray of a single candle, the heir to the fortunes once destined to her son wrestled also with the grim Tyrant, who seemed, however, scared from his prey by the arts and luxuries which the world of rich men raises up in defiance of the grave.

Arthur was, indeed, very seriously injured; one of his ribs was broken, and he had received two severe contusions on the

head. To insensibility succeeded fever, followed by delirium. He was in imminent danger for several days. If anything could console his parents for such an affliction, it was the thought that, at least, he was saved from the chance of meeting Philip.

Mr. Beaufort, in the instinct of that capricious and fluctuating conscience which belongs to weak minds, which remains still and drooping and lifeless as a flag on a mast-head during the calm of prosperity, but flutters and flaps and tosses when the wind blows and the wave heaves, thought very acutely and remorsefully of the condition of the Mortons during the danger of his own son. So far, indeed, from his anxiety for Arthur monopolizing all his care, it only sharpened his charity towards the orphans; for many a man becomes devout and good when he fancies he has an *immediate* interest in appeasing Providence. The morning after Arthur's accident, he sent for Mr. Blackwell. He commissioned him to see that Catherine's funeral rites were performed with all due care and attention; he bade him obtain an interview with Philip, and assure the youth of Mr. Beaufort's good and friendly disposition towards him, and to offer to forward his views in any course of education he might prefer, or any profession he might adopt; and he earnestly counselled the lawyer to employ all his tact and delicacy in conferring with one of so proud and fiery a temper. Mr. Blackwell, however, had no tact or delicacy to employ. He went to the house of mourning, forced his way to Philip; and the very exordium of his harangue, which was devoted to praises of the extraordinary generosity and benevolence of his employer, mingled with condescending admonitions towards gratitude from Philip, so exasperated the boy that Mr. Blackwell was extremely glad to get out of the house with a whole skin. He, however, did not neglect the more formal part of his mission; but communicated immediately with a fashionable undertaker, and gave orders for a very genteel funeral. He thought after the funeral that Philip would be in a less excited state of mind, and more likely to hear reason. He therefore deferred a second interview with the orphan till

after that event; and in the meanwhile despatched a letter to Mr. Beaufort, stating that he had attended to his instructions; that the orders for the funeral were given; but that at present Mr. Philip Morton's mind was a little disordered, and that he could not calmly discuss the plans for the future suggested by Mr. Beaufort. He did not doubt, however, that in another interview all would be arranged according to the wishes his client had so nobly conveyed to him. Mr. Beaufort's conscience on this point was therefore set at rest.

It was a dull, close, oppressive morning upon which the remains of Catherine Morton were consigned to the grave. With the preparations for the funeral Philip did not interfere; he did not inquire by whose orders all that solemnity of mutes and coaches and black plumes and crape bands was appointed. If his vague and undeveloped conjecture ascribed this last and vain attention to Robert Beaufort, it neither lessened the sullen resentment he felt against his uncle, nor on the other hand did he conceive that he had a right to forbid respect to the dead, though he might reject service for the survivor. Since Mr. Blackwell's visit, he had remained in a sort of apathy or torpor, which seemed to the people of the house to partake rather of indifference than woe.

The funeral was over, and Philip had returned to the apartments occupied by the deceased; and now, for the first time, he set himself to examine what papers, etc., she had left behind. In an old escritoire, he found, first, various packets of letters in his father's handwriting, the characters in many of them faded by time. He opened a few; they were the earliest love-letters. He did not dare to read above a few lines, — so much did their living tenderness and breathing, frank, hearty passion contrast with the fate of the adored one. In those letters, the very heart of the writer seemed to beat! Now both hearts alike were stilled, and Ghost called vainly unto Ghost!

He came, at length, to a letter in his mother's hand, addressed to himself, and dated two days before her death. He went to the window, and gasped in the mists of the sultry air for breath. Below were heard the noises of London. — the

shrill cries of itinerant vendors, the rolling carts, the whoop of boys returned for a while from school. Amidst all these rose one loud, merry peal of laughter, which drew his attention mechanically to the spot whence it came; it was at the threshold of a public-house, before which stood the hearse that had conveyed his mother's coffin, and the gay undertakers, halting there to refresh themselves. He closed the window with a groan, retired to the farthest corner of the room, and read as follows:—

“MY DEAREST PHILIP, — When you read this, I shall be no more. You and poor Sidney will have neither father nor mother, nor fortune nor name. Heaven is more just than man, and in Heaven is my hope for you. You, Philip, are already past childhood; your nature is one formed, I think, to wrestle successfully with the world. Guard against your own passions, and you may bid defiance to the obstacles that will beset your path in life. And lately, in our reverses, Philip, you have so subdued those passions, so schooled the pride and impetuosity of your childhood, that I have contemplated your prospects with less fear than I used to do, even when they seemed so brilliant. Forgive me, my dear child, if I have concealed from you my state of health, and if my death be a sudden and unlooked-for shock. Do not grieve for me too long. For myself, my release is indeed escape from the prison-house and the chain, — from bodily pain and mental torture, which may, I fondly hope, prove some expiation for the errors of a happier time; for I did err, when, even from the least selfish motives, I suffered my union with your father to remain concealed, and thus ruined the hopes of those who had rights upon me equal even to *his*. But, O Philip! beware of the first false steps into deceit; beware, too, of the passions which do not betray their fruit till years and years after the leaves that look so green and the blossoms that seemed so fair.

“I repeat my solemn injunction, — Do not grieve for me; but strengthen your mind and heart to receive the charge that I now confide to you, — my Sidney, my child, your brother! He is so soft, so gentle, he has been so dependent for very life upon me, and we are parted now for the first and last time! He is with strangers; and — and — oh, Philip, Philip, watch over him for the love you bear, not only to him, but to me! Be to him a father as well as a brother. Put your stout heart against the world, so that you may screen him, the weak child, from its malice. He has not your talents nor strength of charac-

ter ; without you he is nothing. Live, toil, rise for his sake not less than your own. If you knew how this heart beats as I write to you, if you could conceive what comfort I take for *him* from my confidence in you, you would feel a new spirit, my spirit, my mother-spirit of love and forethought and vigilance, enter into you while you read. See him when I am gone ; comfort and soothe him. Happily he is too young yet to know all his loss ; and do not let him think unkindly of me in the days to come, for he is a child now, and they may poison his mind against me more easily than they can yours. Think, if he is unhappy hereafter, he may forget how I loved him, he may curse those who gave him birth. Forgive me all this, Philip, my son, and heed it well.

“ And now, where you find this letter, you will see a key ; it opens a well in the bureau in which I have hoarded my little savings. You will see that I have not died in poverty. Take what there is, — young as you are you may want it more now than hereafter ; but hold it in trust for your brother as well as yourself. If he is harshly treated (and you will go and see him, and you will remember that *he* would writhe under what *you* might scarcely feel), or if they overtask him (he is so young to work), yet it may find him a home near you. God watch over and guard you both ! You are orphans now. But HE has told even the orphans to call him ‘ Father ! ’ ”

When he had read this letter, Philip Morton fell upon his knees, and prayed.

CHAPTER II.

HIS curse ! Dost comprehend what that word means,
Shot from a father's angry breath ?

JAMES SHIRLEY: *The Brothers.*

This term is fatal, and affrights me. — *Ibid.*

Those fond philosophers that magnify
Our human nature . . .

Conversed but little with the world ; they knew not
The fierce vexation of community ! — Ibid.

AFTER he had recovered his self-possession, Philip opened the well of the bureau, and was astonished and affected to find that Catherine had saved more than £100. Alas ! how much

must she have pinched herself to have hoarded this little treasure! After burning his father's love-letters, and some other papers, which he deemed useless, he made up a little bundle of those trifling effects belonging to the deceased which he valued as memorials and relics of her, quitted the apartment, and descended to the parlour behind the shop. On the way he met with the kind servant, and recalling the grief that she had manifested for his mother since he had been in the house, he placed two sovereigns in her hand. "And now," said he, as the servant wept while he spoke, "now I can bear to ask you what I have not before done. How did my poor mother die? Did she suffer much? or — or —"

"She went off like a lamb, sir," said the girl, drying her eyes. "You see the gentleman had been with her all the day, and she was much more easy and comfortable in her mind after he came."

"The gentleman! Not the gentleman I found here?"

"Oh, dear, no! Not the pale middle-aged gentleman nurse and I saw go down as the clock struck two. But the young, soft-spoken gentleman who came in the morning, and said as how he was a relation. He stayed with her till she slept; and, when she woke, she smiled in his face; I shall never forget that smile, for I was standing on the other side, as it might be here, and the doctor was by the window, pouring out the doctor's stuff in the glass; and so she looked on the young gentleman, and then looked round at us all, and shook her head very gently, but did not speak. And the gentleman asked her how she felt, and she took both his hands and kissed them; and then he put his arms round and raised her up to take the physic like, and she said then, 'You will never forget them?' and he said, 'Never.' I don't know what that meant, sir!"

"Well, well, go on."

"And her head fell back on his buzzom, and she looked so happy; and when the doctor came to the bedside she was quite gone."

"And the stranger had my post! No matter; God bless him, God bless him! Who was he; what was his name?"

"I don't know, sir; he did not say. He stayed after the doctor went, and cried very bitterly; he took on more than you did, sir."

"Ay."

"And the other gentleman came just as he was a-going, and they did not seem to like each other; for I heard him through the wall, as nurse and I were in the next room, speak as if he was scolding; but he did not stay long."

"And has never been seen since?"

"No, sir. Perhaps missus can tell you more about him. But won't you take something, sir? Do, — you look so pale."

Philip, without speaking, pushed her gently aside, and went slowly down the stairs. He entered the parlour, where two or three children were seated, playing at dominos; he despatched one for their mother, the mistress of the shop, who came in, and dropped him a courtesy, with a very grave, sad face, as was proper.

"I am going to leave your house, ma'am; and I wish to settle any little arrears of rent, etc."

"Oh, sir! don't mention it," said the landlady; and as she spoke, she took a piece of paper from her bosom, very neatly folded, and laid it on the table. "And here, sir," she added, taking from the same depository a card, — "here is the card left by the gentleman who saw to the funeral. He called half an hour ago, and bade me say, with his compliments, that he would wait on you to-morrow at eleven o'clock. So I hope you won't go yet, for I think he means to settle everything for you; he said as much, sir."

Philip glanced over the card, and read, "Mr. George Blackwell, Lincoln's Inn." His brow grew dark; he let the card fall on the ground, put his foot on it with a quiet scorn, and muttered to himself, "The lawyer shall not bribe me out of my curse!" He turned to the total of the bill, — not heavy, for poor Catherine had regularly defrayed the expense of her scanty maintenance and humble lodging, — paid the money, and as the landlady wrote the receipt, he asked, "Who was the gentleman, the younger gentleman, who called in the morning of the day my mother died?"

"Oh, sir! I am so sorry I did not get his name. Mr. Perkins said that he was some relation. Very odd he has never been since. But he'll be sure to call again, sir; you had much better stay here."

"No; it does not signify. All that he could do is done. But stay, give him this note, if he should call."

Philip, taking the pen from the landlady's hand, hastily wrote (while Mrs. Lacy went to bring him sealing-wax and a light) these words:—

I cannot guess who you are; they say that you call yourself a relation; that must be some mistake. I knew not that my poor mother had relations so kind. But, whoever you be, you soothed her last hours, she died in your arms; and if ever—years, long years hence—we should chance to meet, and I can do anything to aid another, my blood and my life and my heart and my soul,—all are slaves to your will. If you be really of her kindred, I commend to you my brother; he is at —, with Mr. Morton. If you can serve him, my mother's soul will watch over you as a guardian angel. As for me, I ask no help from any one; I go into the world and will carve out my own way. So much do I shrink from the thought of charity from others, that I do not believe I could bless you as I do now if your kindness to me did not close with the stone upon my mother's grave.

PHILIP.

He sealed this letter, and gave it to the woman.

"Oh, by the by," said she, "I had forgot; the Doctor said that if you would send for him, he would be most happy to call on you, and give you any advice."

"Very well."

"And what shall I say to Mr. Blackwell?"

"That he may tell his employer to remember our last interview."

With that Philip took up his bundle and strode from the house. He went first to the churchyard, where his mother's remains had been that day interred. It was near at hand, — a quiet, almost a rural, spot. The gate stood ajar, for there was a public path through the churchyard, and Philip entered with a noiseless tread. It was then near evening; the sun had broken out from the mists of the earlier day, and the westering rays shone bright and holy upon the solemn place.

"Mother! Mother!" sobbed the orphan, as he fell prostrate before that fresh green mound; "here, here I have come to repeat my oath, to swear again that I will be faithful to the charge you have entrusted to your wretched son! And at this hour I dare ask if there be on this earth one more miserable and forlorn?"

As words to this effect struggled from his lips, a loud, shrill voice, the cracked, painful voice of weak age wrestling with strong passion, rose close at hand.

"Away, reprobate! thou art accursed!"

Philip started, and shuddered as if the words were addressed to himself, and from the grave; but as he rose on his knee, and tossing the wild hair from his eyes looked confusedly round, he saw at a short distance, and in the shadow of the wall, two forms, — the one an old man with gray hair, who was seated on a crumbling wooden tomb, facing the setting sun; the other a man apparently yet in the vigour of life, who appeared bent as in humble supplication. The old man's hands were outstretched over the head of the younger, as if suiting terrible action to the terrible words, and after a moment's pause — a moment, but it seemed far longer to Philip — there was heard a deep, wild, ghastly howl from a dog that cowered at the old man's feet; a howl, perhaps of fear at the passion of his master, which the animal might associate with danger.

"Father! Father!" said the suppliant, reproachfully, "your very dog rebukes your curse."

"Be dumb! My dog! What hast thou left me on earth but him? Thou hast made me loathe the sight of friends, for thou hast made me loathe mine own name. Thou hast covered it with disgrace; thou hast turned mine old age into a by-word; thy crimes leave me solitary in the midst of my shame!"

"It is many years since we met, Father; we may never meet again. Shall we part thus?"

"Thus, aha!" said the old man, in a tone of withering sarcasm, "I comprehend, — you are come for money!"

At this taunt the son started as if stung by a serpent,

raised his head to its full height, folded his arms, and replied, —

“Sir, you wrong me; for more than twenty years I have maintained myself, — no matter how, but without taxing you, — and now I felt remorse for having suffered you to discard me, — now, when you are old and helpless, and, I heard, blind, and you might want aid, even from your poor good-for-nothing son. But I have done. Forget, — not my sins, but this interview. Repeal your curse, Father, I have enough on my head without yours; and so — let the son at least bless the father who curses him. Farewell!”

The speaker turned as he thus said, with a voice that trembled at the close, and brushed rapidly by Philip, whom he did not, however, appear to perceive; but Philip, by the last red beam of the sun, saw again that marked storm-beaten face which it was difficult, once seen, to forget, and recognized the stranger on whose breast he had slept the night of his fatal visit to R——.

The old man's imperfect vision did not detect the departure of his son; but his face changed and softened as the latter strode silently through the rank grass.

“William!” he said at last, gently; “William!” and the tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks; “my son!” but that son was gone. The old man listened for reply; none came. “He has left me, poor William! we shall never meet again;” and he sank once more on the old tombstone, dumb, rigid, motionless, — an image of Time himself in his own domain of Graves. The dog crept closer to his master, and licked his hand. Philip stood for a moment in thoughtful silence; his exclamation of despair had been answered as by his better angel. There *was* a being more miserable than himself; and the Accursed would have envied the Bereaved!

The twilight had closed in. The earliest star — the star of Memory and Love, the Hesperus hymned by every poet since the world began — was fair in the arch of heaven as Philip quitted the spot, with a spirit more reconciled to the future, more softened, chastened, attuned to gentle and pious thoughts than perhaps ever yet had made his soul dominant over the

deep and dark tide of his gloomy passions. He went thence to a neighbouring sculptor, and paid beforehand for a plain tablet to be placed above the grave he had left. He had just quitted that shop, in the same street, not many doors removed from the house in which his mother had breathed her last. He was pausing by a crossing, irresolute whether to repair at once to the home assigned to Sidney, or to seek some shelter in town for that night, when three men who were on the opposite side of the way suddenly caught sight of him.

"There he is! there he is! Stop, sir! stop!"

Philip heard these words, looked up, and recognized the voice and the person of Mr. Plaskwith. The bookseller was accompanied by Mr. Plimmins and a sturdy, ill-favoured stranger.

A nameless feeling of fear, rage, and disgust seized the unhappy boy, and at the same moment a ragged vagabond whispered to him, "Stump it, my cove; that's a Bow Street runner."

Then there shot through Philip's mind the recollection of the money he had seized, though but to dash away. Was he now — he, still to his own conviction, the heir of an ancient and spotless name — to be hunted as a thief; or, at the best, what right over his person and his liberty had he given to his taskmaster? Ignorant of the law, the law only seemed to him, as it ever does to the ignorant and the friendless, a Foe. Quicker than lightning these thoughts, which it takes so many words to describe, flashed through the storm and darkness of his breast; and at the very instant that Mr. Plimmins had laid hands on his shoulder his resolution was formed. The instinct of self beat loud at his heart. With a bound, a spring that sent Mr. Plimmins sprawling in the kennel, he darted across the road, and fled down an opposite lane.

"Stop him! stop!" cried the bookseller, and the officer rushed after him with almost equal speed. Lane after lane, alley after alley, fled Philip, dodging, winding, breathless, panting; and lane after lane, and alley after alley, thickened at his heels the crowd that pursued. The idle and the curious and the officious, ragged boys, ragged men, from stall and

from cellar, from corner and from crossing, joined in that delicious chase, which runs down young Error till it sinks, too often, at the door of the jail or the foot of the gallows. But Philip slackened not his pace; he began to distance his pursuers. He was now in a street which they had not yet entered, — a quiet street, with few if any shops. Before the threshold of a better kind of public-house, or rather tavern, to judge by its appearance, lounged two men; and while Philip flew on, the cry of "Stop him!" had changed as the shout passed to new voices, into "*Stop the thief!*" — that cry yet howled in the distance. One of the loungers seized him. Philip, desperate and ferocious, struck at him with all his force; but the blow was scarcely felt by that Herculean frame.

"Pish!" said the man, scornfully; "I am no spy; if you run from justice, I would help you to a sign-post."

Struck by the voice, Philip looked hard at the speaker. It was the voice of the Accursed Son.

"Save me! you remember me?" said the orphan, faintly.

"Ah! I think I do; poor lad! Follow me; this way!"

The stranger turned within the tavern, passed the hall through a sort of corridor that led into a back-yard which opened upon a nest of courts or passages.

"You are safe for the present; I will take you where you can tell me all at your ease. See!" As he spoke they emerged into an open street, and the guide pointed to a row of hackney coaches. "Be quick; get in. Coachman, drive fast to —"

Philip did not hear the rest of the direction.

Our story returns to Sidney.

CHAPTER III.

Nous vous mettrons à couvert,
Répondit le pot de fer :
Si quelque matière dure
Vous menace d'aventure,
Entre deux je passerai,
Et du coup vous sauverai.

Le pot de terre en souffre!¹ — LA FONTAINE.

"SIDNEY, come here, sir! What *have* you been at? you have torn your frill into tatters! How did you do this? Come, sir, no lies."

"Indeed, ma'am, it was not my fault. I just put my head out of the window to see the coach go by, and a nail caught me here."

"Why, you little plague! you have scratched yourself; you are always in mischief. What business had you to look after the coach?"

"I don't know," said Sidney, hanging his head ruefully.

"La, Mother!" cried the youngest of the cousins, a square-built, ruddy, coarse-featured urchin, about Sidney's age, — "la, Mother, he never see a coach in the street when we are at play but he runs arter it."

"After, not arter," said Mr. Roger Morton, taking the pipe from his mouth.

"Why do you go after the coaches, Sidney?" said Mrs. Morton. "It is very naughty; you will be run over some day."

"Yes, ma'am," said Sidney, who during the whole colloquy had been trembling from head to foot.

¹ "We, replied the Iron Pot, will shield you. Should any hard substance menace you with danger, I'll intervene, and save you from the shock. . . . The Earthen Pot was the sufferer!"

"'Yes, ma'am,' and 'no, ma'am;,' you have no more manners than a cobbler's boy."

"Don't tease the child, my dear; he is crying," said Mr. Morton, more authoritatively than usual. "Come here, my man!" and the worthy uncle took him in his lap and held his glass of brandy-and-water to his lips; Sidney, too frightened to refuse, sipped hurriedly, keeping his large eyes fixed on his aunt, as children do when they fear a cuff.

"You spoil the boy more than you do your own flesh and blood," said Mrs. Morton, greatly displeased.

Here Tom, the youngest-born before described, put his mouth to his mother's ear, and whispered loud enough to be heard by all, "He runs arter the coach 'cause he thinks his ma may be in it. Who's home-sick I should like to know? Ba! Baa!"

The boy pointed his finger over his mother's shoulder, and the other children burst into a loud giggle.

"Leave the room, all of you; leave the room!" said Mr. Morton, rising angrily and stamping his foot.

The children, who were in great awe of their father, huddled and hustled each other to the door; but Tom, who went last, bold in his mother's favour, popped his head through the doorway, and cried, "Good-by, little home-sick!"

A sudden slap in the face from his father changed his chuckle into a very different kind of music, and a loud indignant sob was heard without for some moments after the door was closed.

"If that's the way you behave to your children, Mr. Morton, I vow you sha'n't have any more if I can help it. Don't come near me; don't touch me!" and Mrs. Morton assumed the resentful air of offended beauty.

"Pshaw!" growled the spouse, and he reseated himself and resumed his pipe. There was a dead silence. Sidney crouched near his uncle, looking very pale. Mrs. Morton, who was knitting, knitted away with the excited energy of nervous irritation.

"Ring the bell, Sidney," said Mr. Morton. The boy obeyed; the parlour-maid entered. "Take Master Sidney to

his room; keep the boys away from him, and give him a large slice of bread and jam, Martha."

"Jam, indeed! treacle," said Mrs. Morton.

"Jam, Martha," repeated the uncle, authoritatively.

"Treacle," reiterated the aunt.

"Jam, I say!"

"Treacle, you hear; and for that matter, Martha has no jam to give!"

The husband had nothing more to say.

"Good night, Sidney; there's a good boy, go and kiss your aunt and make your bow; and I say, my lad, don't mind those plagues. I'll talk to them to-morrow, that I will; no one shall be unkind to you in my house."

Sidney muttered something, and went timidly up to Mrs. Morton. His look so gentle and subdued; his eyes full of tears; his pretty mouth which, though silent, pleaded so eloquently; his willingness to forgive, and his wish to be forgiven, might have melted many a heart harder, perhaps, than Mrs. Morton's. But there reigned what are worse than hardness, — prejudice and wounded vanity, — maternal vanity. His contrast to her own rough, coarse children grated on her, and set the teeth of her mind on edge.

"There, child, don't tread on my gown; you are so awkward. Say your prayers, and don't throw off the counterpane! I don't like slovenly boys."

Sidney put his finger in his mouth, drooped, and vanished.

"Now, Mrs. M.," said Mr. Morton, abruptly, and knocking out the ashes of his pipe, "now, Mrs. M., one word for all: I have told you that I promised poor Catherine to be a father to that child, and it goes to my heart to see him so snubbed. Why you dislike him I can't guess for the life of me. I never saw a sweeter-tempered child."

"Go on, sir, go on; make your personal reflections on your own lawful wife. They don't hurt me, oh, no, not at all! Sweet-tempered, indeed; I suppose your own children are not sweet-tempered?"

"That's neither here nor there," said Mr. Morton: "my

own children are such as God made them, and I am very well satisfied."

"Indeed you *may* be proud of such a family; and to think of the pains I have taken with them, and how I have saved you in nurses, and the bad times I have had; and now, to find their noses put out of joint by that little mischief-making interloper! It is too bad of you, Mr. Morton; you will break my heart, *that* you will!"

Mrs. Morton put her handkerchief to her eyes and sobbed.

The husband was moved; he got up and attempted to take her hand. "Indeed, Margaret, I did not mean to vex you."

"And I who have been such a fa—fai—faithful wi—wi—wife, and brought you such a deal of mon—mon—money, and always stud—stud—studied your interests! Many's the time when you have been fast asleep that I have sat up half the night men—men—mending the house linen; and you have not been the same man, Roger, since that boy came!"

"Well, well!" said the good man, quite overcome, and fairly taking her round the waist and kissing her; "no words between us; it makes life quite unpleasant. If it pains you to have Sidney here, I will put him to some school in the town, where they'll be kind to him. Only, if you would, Margaret, for my sake—old girl! come, now! there's a darling!—just be more tender with him. You see he frets so after his mother. Think how little Tom would fret if he was away from you! Poor little Tom!"

"La! Mr. Morton, you are such a man! There's no resisting your ways! You know how to come over me, don't you?"

And Mrs. Morton smiled benignly, as she escaped from his conjugal arms and smoothed her cap.

Peace thus restored, Mr. Morton refilled his pipe, and the good lady, after a pause, resumed, in a very mild, conciliatory tone, —

"I'll tell you what it is, Roger, that vexes me with that there child. He is so deceitful, and he does tell such fibs!"

"Fibs! that is a very bad fault," said Mr. Morton, gravely. "*That* must be corrected."

"It was but the other day that I saw him break a pane of

glass in the shop; and when I taxed him with it, he denied it, — and with such a face! I can't abide story-telling."

"Let me know the next story he tells; I'll cure him," said Mr. Morton, sternly. "You know how I broke Tom of it. Spare the rod, and spoil the child. And when I promised to be kind to the boy, of course I did not mean that I was not to take care of his morals, and see that he grew up an honest man. Tell truth and shame the devil, — that's my motto."

"Spoke like yourself, Roger!" said Mrs. Morton, with great animation. "But you see he has not had the advantage of such a father as you. I wonder your sister don't write to you. Some people make a great fuss about their feelings; but out of sight out of mind."

"I hope she is not ill. Poor Catherine! she looked in a very bad way when she was here," said Mr. Morton; and he turned uneasily to the fireplace and sighed.

Here the servant entered with the supper-tray, and the conversation fell upon other topics.

Mrs. Roger Morton's charge against Sidney was, alas! too true. He had acquired under that roof a terrible habit of telling stories. He had never incurred that vice with his mother, because then and there he had nothing to fear; *now*, he had everything to fear, — the grim aunt, even the quiet, kind, cold, austere uncle, the apprentices, the strange servants, and, oh! more than all, those hard-eyed, loud-laughing tormentors, the boys of his own age! Naturally timid, severity made him actually a coward; and when the nerves tremble, a lie sounds as surely as, when I vibrate that wire, the bell at the end of it will ring. Beware of the man who has been roughly treated as a child.

The day after the conference just narrated, Mr. Morton, who was subject to erysipelas, had taken a little cooling medicine. He breakfasted, therefore, later than usual, after the rest of the family; and at this meal — *pour lui soulager* — he ordered the luxury of a muffin. Now it so chanced that he had only finished half the muffin, and drunk one cup of tea, when he was called into the shop by a customer of great importance, — a prosy old lady, who always gave her orders with remark-

able precision, and who valued herself on a character for affability, which she maintained by never buying a penny ribbon without asking the shopman how all his family were, and talking news about every other family in the place. At the time Mr. Morton left the parlour, Sidney and Master Tom were therein, seated on two stools, and casting up division sums on their respective slates, — a point of education to which Mr. Morton attended with great care. As soon as his father's back was turned, Master Tom's eyes wandered from the slate to the muffin, as it leered at him from the slop-basin. Never did Pythian sibyl, seated above the bubbling spring, utter more oracular eloquence to her priest, than did that muffin — at least the parts of it yet extant — utter to the fascinated senses of Master Tom. First he sighed; then he moved round on his stool; then he got up; then he peered at the muffin from a respectful distance; then he gradually approached, and walked round, and round, and round it, his eyes getting bigger and bigger; then he peeped through the glass-door into the shop, and saw his father busily engaged with the old lady; then he began to calculate and philosophize, — perhaps his father had done breakfast; perhaps he would not come back at all; if he came back, he would not miss one corner of the muffin; and if he did miss it, why should Tom be supposed to have taken it? As he thus communed with himself, he drew nearer into the fatal vortex, and at last, with a desperate plunge, he seized the triangular temptation, —

“And ere a man had power to say ‘Behold!’
The jaws of *Thomas* had devoured it up.”

Sidney, disturbed from his studies by the agitation of his companion, witnessed this proceeding with great and conscientious alarm. “O Tom!” said he, “what will your papa say?”

“Look at that!” said Tom, putting his fist under Sidney's reluctant nose. “If Father misses it, you'll say the cat took it. If you don't — my eye, what a wapping I'll give you!”

Here Mr. Morton's voice was heard wishing the lady “Good

morning!" and Master Tom, thinking it better to leave the credit of the invention solely to Sidney, whispered, "Say I'm gone upstairs for my pocket-thanker," and hastily absconded.

Mr. Morton, already in a very bad humour, partly at the effects of the cooling medicine, partly at the suspension of his breakfast, stalked into the parlour. His tea, the second cup already poured out, was cold. He turned towards the muffin, and missed the lost piece at a glance.

"Who has been at my muffin?" said he, in a voice that seemed to Sidney like the voice he had always supposed an ogre to possess. "Have you, Master Sidney?"

"N—n—no, sir; indeed, sir!"

"Then Tom has. Where is he?"

"Gone upstairs for his handkerchief, sir."

"Did he take my muffin? Speak the truth!"

"No, sir; it was the — it was the — the cat, sir!"

"O you wicked, wicked boy!" cried Mrs. Morton, who had followed her husband into the parlour; "the cat kittened last night, and is locked up in the coal-cellar!"

"Come here, Master Sidney! No! first go down, Margaret, and see if the cat *is* in the cellar: it might have got out, Mrs. M.," said Mr. Morton, just even in his wrath.

Mrs. Morton went, and there was a dead silence, except indeed in Sidney's heart, which beat louder than a clock ticks. Mr. Morton, meanwhile, went to a little cupboard. While still there, Mrs. Morton returned. The cat *was* in the cellar, the key turned on her, in no mood to eat muffins, poor thing! She would not even lap her milk! Like her mistress, she had had a very bad time!

"Now come here, sir!" said Mr. Morton, withdrawing himself from the cupboard, with a small horse-hip in his hand, "I will teach you how to speak the truth in future! Confess that you have told a lie!"

"Yes, sir, it was a lie! Pray, pray forgive me; but Tom made me!"

"What! when poor Tom is upstairs? Worse and worse!" said Mrs. Morton, lifting up her hands and eyes. "What a viper!"

"For shame, boy, for shame! Take that, and that, and that—"

Writhing, shrinking, still more terrified than hurt, the poor child cowered beneath the lash.

"Mamma! Mamma!" he cried at last, "oh, why, why did you leave me?"

At these words Mr. Morton stayed his hand; the whip fell to the ground.

"Yet it is all for the boy's good," he muttered. "There, child, I hope this is the last time. There, you are not much hurt. Zounds, don't cry so!"

"He will alarm the whole street," said Mrs. Morton; "I never see such a child! Here, take this parcel to Mrs. Birnie's—you know the house, only next street, and dry your eyes before you get there. Don't go through the shop; this way out."

She pushed the child, still sobbing with a vehemence that she could not comprehend, through the private passage into the street, and returned to her husband.

"You are convinced now, Mr. M.?"

"Pshaw! ma'am; don't talk. But, to be sure, that's how I cured Tom of fibbing. The tea's as cold as a stone!"

CHAPTER IV.

Le bien nous le faisons; le mal c'est la Fortune.

*On a toujours raison, le Destin toujours tort.*¹—LA FONTAINE.

UPON the early morning of the day commemorated by the historical events of our last chapter, two men were deposited by a branch coach at the inn of a hamlet about ten miles distant from the town in which Mr. Roger Morton resided.

¹ "The Good, we effect ourselves; the Evil is the handiwork of Fortune. Mortals are always in the right, Destiny always in the wrong."

Though the hamlet was small, the inn was large, for it was placed close by a huge finger-post that pointed to three great roads. One led to the town before mentioned; another to the heart of a manufacturing district; and a third to a populous seaport. The weather was fine, and the two travellers ordered breakfast to be taken into an arbour in the garden, as well as the basins and towels necessary for ablution. The elder of the travellers appeared to be unequivocally foreign; you would have guessed him at once for a German. He wore, what was then very uncommon in this country, a loose, brown-linen *blouse*, buttoned to the chin, with a leathern belt, into which were stuck a German meerschaum and a tobacco-pouch. He had very long flaxen hair, false or real, that streamed half-way down his back, large light mustaches, and a rough, sun-burnt complexion, which made the fairness of the hair more remarkable. He wore an enormous pair of green spectacles, and complained much in broken English of the weakness of his eyes. All about him, even to the smallest minutiae, indicated the German, — not only the large muscular frame, the broad feet, and vast though well-shaped hands, but the brooch — evidently purchased of a Jew in some great fair — stuck ostentatiously and superfluously into his stock; the quaint, droll-looking carpet-bag, which he refused to trust to the Boots; and the great, massive, dingy ring which he wore on his forefinger. The other was a slender, remarkably upright, and sinewy youth, in a blue frock, over which was thrown a large cloak, a travelling cap, with a shade that concealed all of the upper part of his face, except a dark quick eye of uncommon fire, and a shawl handkerchief, which was equally useful in concealing the lower part of the countenance. On descending from the coach, the German with some difficulty made the hostler understand that he wanted a post-chaise in a quarter of an hour; and then, without entering the house, he and his friend strolled to the arbour. While the maid-servant was covering the table with bread, butter, tea, eggs, and a huge round of beef, the German was busy in washing his hands, and talking in his national tongue to the young man, who returned no answer; but as soon as the servant had com-

pleted her operations the foreigner turned round, and observing her eyes fixed on his brooch with much female admiration, he made one stride to her.

"*Der Teufel!* my goot *Mädchen* — but you are von var — pretty — vat you call it?" and he gave her, as he spoke, so hearty a smack that the girl was more flustered than flattered by the courtesy.

"Keep yourself to yourself, sir!" said she, very tartly, — for chambermaids never like to be kissed by a middle-aged gentleman when a younger one is by. Whereupon the German replied by a pinch — it is immaterial to state the exact spot to which that delicate caress was directed. But this last offence was so inexpiable that the "*mädchen*" bounced off with a face of scarlet, and a "Sir, you are no gentleman; that's what you ar'n't!" The German thrust his head out of the arbour, and followed her with a loud laugh; then, drawing himself in again, he said in quite another accent, and in excellent English, "There, Master Philip, we have got rid of the girl for the rest of the morning, and that's exactly what I wanted to do; women's wits are confoundedly sharp. Well, did I not tell you right, we have baffled all the bloodhounds!"

"And here, then, Gawtreys, we are to part," said Philip, mournfully.

"I wish you would think better of it, my boy," returned Mr. Gawtreys, breaking an egg; "how can you shift for yourself, — no kith nor kin, not even that important machine for giving advice called a friend, — no, not a friend, when I am gone? I foresee how it must end. (D — it, salt butter, by Jove!)"

"If I were alone in the world, as I have told you again and again, perhaps I might pin my fate to yours. But my brother!"

"There it is, always wrong when we act from our feelings. My whole life, which some day or other I will tell you, proves that. Your brother! bah! is he not very well off with his own uncle and aunt? — plenty to eat and drink, I dare say. Come, man, you must be as hungry as a hawk; a slice of the

beef? Let well alone, and shift for yourself. What good can you do your brother?"

"I don't know, but I must see him; I have sworn it."

"Well, go and see him, and then strike across the country to me. I will wait a day for you, — there now!"

"But tell me first," said Philip, very earnestly, and fixing his dark eyes on his companion, — "tell me, — yes, I must speak frankly, — tell me, you who would link my fortunes with your own, — tell me, what and who are you?"

Gawtrey looked up.

"What do you suppose?" said he, dryly.

"I fear to suppose anything, lest I wrong you; but the strange place to which you took me the evening on which you saved me from pursuit, the persons I met there —"

"Well-dressed, and very civil to you?"

"True! but with a certain wild looseness in their talk that — But *I* have no right to judge others by mere appearance; nor is it this that has made me anxious, and, if you will, suspicious."

"What then?"

"Your dress, your disguise."

"Disguised *yourself*! ha! ha! Behold the world's charity! You fly from some danger, some pursuit, disguised, you, who hold yourself guiltless; I do the same, and you hold me criminal, — a robber, perhaps, a murderer it may be! I will tell you what I am: I am a son of Fortune, an adventurer; I live by my wits. So do poets and lawyers, and all the charlatans of the world; I am a charlatan, a chameleon. 'Each man in his time plays many parts;' I play any part in which Money, the Arch-Manager, promises me a livelihood. Are you satisfied?"

"Perhaps," answered the boy, sadly, "when I know more of the world, I shall understand you better. Strange, strange, that you, out of all men, should have been kind to me in distress!"

"Not at all strange. Ask the beggar whom he gets the most pence from, — the fine lady in her carriage, the beau smelling of eau de Cologne? Pish! the people nearest to

being beggars themselves keep the beggar alive. You were friendless, and the man who has all earth for a foe befriends you. It is the way of the world, sir, the way of the world. Come, eat while you can; this time next year you may have no beef to your bread."

Thus masticating and moralizing at the same time, Mr. Gawtrety at last finished a breakfast that would have astonished the whole Corporation of London; and then taking out a large old watch, with an enamelled back, — doubtless more German than its master, — he said, as he lifted up his carpet-bag, "I must be off. *Tempus fugit*, and I must arrive just in time to nick the vessels; shall get to Ostend, or Rotterdam, safe and snug; thence to Paris. How my pretty Fan will have grown! Ah, you don't know Fan, — make you a nice little wife one of these days! Cheer up, man, we shall meet again. Be sure of it; and hark ye, that strange place, as you call it, where I took you, — you can find it again?"

"Not I."

"Here, then, is the address. Whenever you want me, go there, ask to see Mr. Gregg, — old fellow with one eye, you recollect, — shake him by the hand just so; you catch the trick, practise it again. No, the forefinger thus; that's right. Say 'blater,' no more, — 'blater;' stay, I will write it down for you; and then ask for William Gawtrety's direction. He will give it you at once, without questions, these signs understood; and if you want money for your passage, he will give you that also, with advice into the bargain. Always a warm welcome with me. And so take care of yourself, and good-by. I see my chaise is at the door."

As he spoke, Gawtrety shook the young man's hand with cordial vigour, and strode off to his chaise, muttering, "Money well laid out; fee money; I shall have him, and, Gad, I like him, — poor devil!"

CHAPTER V.

He is a cunning coachman that can turn well in a narrow room.

Old Play: from LAMB's Specimens.

Here are two pilgrims,

And neither knows one footstep of the way.

HEYWOOD: *Duchess of Suffolk. Ibid.*

THE chaise had scarce driven from the inn-door when a coach stopped to change horses on its last stage to the town to which Philip was bound. The name of the destination, in gilt letters on the coach-door, caught his eye, as he walked from the arbour towards the road, and in a few moments he was seated as the fourth passenger in the "Nelson Slow and Sure." From under the shade of his cap he darted that quick, quiet glance, which a man who hunts, or is hunted — in other words, who observes, or shuns — soon acquires. At his left hand sat a young woman in a cloak lined with yellow; she had taken off her bonnet and pinned it to the roof of the coach, and looked fresh and pretty in a silk handkerchief, which she had tied round her head, probably to serve as a nightcap during the drowsy length of the journey. Opposite to her was a middle-aged man of pale complexion, and a grave, pensive, studious expression of face; and *vis-à-vis* to Philip sat an overdressed, showy, very good-looking man of about two or three and forty. This gentleman wore auburn whiskers, which met at the chin; a foraging cap, with a gold tassel; a velvet waistcoat, across which, in various folds, hung a golden chain, at the end of which dangled an eye-glass, that from time to time he screwed, as it were, into his right eye; he wore also a blue silk stock, with a frill much crumpled, dirty kid gloves, and over his lap lay a cloak lined with red silk. As Philip glanced towards this personage, the latter fixed his glass also at him, with a scrutinizing stare, which

drew fire from Philip's dark eyes. The man dropped his glass, and said in a half provincial, half *haw-haw* tone, like the stage exquisite of a minor theatre, "Pawdon me, and split legs!" therewith stretching himself between Philip's limbs in the approved fashion of inside passengers. A young man in a white great-coat now came to the door with a glass of warm sherry and water.

"You must take this, you *must* now; it will keep the cold out," — the day was broiling, — said he to the young woman.

"Gracious me!" was the answer, "but I never drink wine of a morning, James; it will get into my head."

"To oblige *me!*" said the young man, sentimentally; whereupon the young lady took the glass, and looking very kindly at her Ganymede, said, "Your health!" and sipped, and made a wry face; then she looked at the passengers, tittered, and said, "I can't bear wine!" and so, very slowly and daintily, sipped up the rest. A silent and expressive squeeze of the hand on returning the glass rewarded the young man, and proved the salutary effect of his prescription.

"All right!" cried the coachman; the hostler twitched the cloths from the leaders, and away went the "Nelson Slow and Sure," with as much pretension as if it had meant to do the ten miles in an hour. The pale gentleman took from his waistcoat pocket a little box containing gum-arabic, and having inserted a couple of morsels between his lips, he next drew forth a little thin volume, which from the manner the lines were printed was evidently devoted to poetry.

The smart gentleman, who since the episode of the sherry and water had kept his glass fixed upon the young lady, now said, with a genteel smirk, "That young gentleman seems very auttentive, miss!"

"He is a very good young man, sir, and takes great care of me."

"Not your brother, miss, eh?"

"La, sir! why not?"

"No faumily likeness; noice-looking fellow enough! But your oiyes and mouth, ah, miss!"

Miss turned away her head, and uttered with pert vivacity,

"I never likes compliments, sir! But the young man is not my brother."

"A sweetheart, eh? Oh fie, miss! Haw! haw!" and the auburn-whiskered Adonis poked Philip in the knee with one hand, and the pale gentleman in the ribs with the other. The latter looked up, and reproachfully; the former drew in his legs, and uttered an angry ejaculation.

"Well, sir, there is no harm in a sweetheart, is there?"

"None in the least, ma'am; I advise you to double the dose. We often hear of two strings to a *bow*. Daun't you think it would be noicer to have two *beaux* to your string?"

As he thus wittily expressed himself, the gentleman took off his cap, and thrust his fingers through a very curling and comely head of hair; the young lady looked at him with evident coquetry, and said, "How you *do* run on, you gentlemen!"

"I may well run on, miss, as long as I run aufter you," was the gallant reply.

Here the pale gentleman, evidently annoyed by being talked across, shut his book up, and looked round. His eye rested on Philip, who, whether from the heat of the day or from the forgetfulness of thought, had pushed his cap from his brows; and the gentleman, after staring at him for a few moments with great earnestness, sighed so heavily that it attracted the notice of all the passengers.

"Are you unwell, sir?" asked the young lady, compassionately.

"A little pain in my side, nothing more!"

"Chaunge places with me, sir," cried the Lothario, officiously. "Now do!" The pale gentleman, after a short hesitation and a bashful excuse, accepted the proposal. In a few moments the young lady and the beau were in deep and whispered conversation, their heads turned towards the window. The pale gentleman continued to gaze at Philip, till the latter, perceiving the notice he excited, coloured, and replaced his cap over his face.

"Are you going to N——?" asked the gentleman, in a gentle, timid voice.

"Yes."

"Is it the first time you have ever been there?"

"Sir!" returned Philip, in a voice that spoke surprise and distaste at his neighbour's curiosity.

"Forgive me," said the gentleman, shrinking back; "but you remind me of — of — a family I once knew in the town. Do you know — the — the Mortons?"

One in Philip's situation, with, as he supposed, the officers of justice in his track (for Gawtreys, for reasons of his own, rather encouraged than allayed his fears), might well be suspicious. He replied therefore, shortly, "I am quite a stranger to the town," and ensconced himself in the corner, as if to take a nap. Alas! that answer was one of the many obstacles he was doomed to build up between himself and a fairer fate.

The gentleman sighed again, and never spoke more to the end of the journey. When the coach halted at the inn, — the same inn which had before given its shelter to poor Catherine, — the young man in the white coat opened the door, and offered his arm to the young lady.

"Do you make any stay here, sir?" said she to the beau, as she unpinned her bonnet from the roof.

"Perhaps so; I am waiting for my phe-a-ton, which my faellow is to bring down, — tauking a little tour."

"We shall be very happy to see you, sir," said the young lady, on whom the phe-a-ton completed the effect produced by the gentleman's previous gallantries; and with that she dropped into his hand a very neat card, on which was printed, "Wavers and Snow, Staymakers, High Street."

The beau put the card gracefully into his pocket, leaped from the coach, nudged aside his rival of the white coat, and offered his arm to the lady, who leaned on it affectionately as she descended.

"This gentleman has been so perlite to me, James," said she. James touched his hat; the beau clapped him on the shoulder. "Ah! you are not a hauppy man, are you? Oh, no, not at all a hauppy man! Good day to you! Guard, that hat-box is mine!"

While Philip was paying the coachman, the beau passed and whispered him, —

“Recollect old Gregg, anything on the lay here, don’t spoil my sport if we meet!” and bustled off into the inn, whistling “God save the king!”

Philip started, then tried to bring to mind the faces which he had seen at the “strange place,” and thought he recalled the features of his fellow-traveller. However, he did not seek to renew the acquaintance, but inquired the way to Mr. Morton’s house, and thither he now proceeded.

He was directed, as a short cut, down one of those narrow passages at the entrance of which posts are placed as an indication that they are appropriated solely to foot-passengers. A dead white wall, which screened the garden of the physician of the place, ran on one side; a high fence to a nursery-ground was on the other; the passage was lonely, for it was now the hour when few persons walk either for business or pleasure in a provincial town, and no sound was heard save the fall of his own step on the broad flag-stones. At the end of the passage in the main street to which it led, he saw already the large, smart, showy shop, with the hot sun shining full on the gilt letters that conveyed to the eyes of the customer the respectable name of “Morton,” when suddenly the silence was broken by choked and painful sobs. He turned, and beneath a *compo* portico, jutting from the wall, which adorned the physician’s door, he saw a child seated on the stone steps weeping bitterly. A thrill shot through Philip’s heart. Did he recognize, disguised as it was by pain and sorrow, that voice? He paused, and laid his hand on the child’s shoulder. “Oh, don’t, don’t, pray don’t; I am going, I am indeed!” cried the child, quailing, and still keeping his hands clasped before his face.

“Sidney!” said Philip. The boy started to his feet, uttered a cry of rapturous joy, and fell upon his brother’s breast.

“Oh, Philip! dear, dear Philip! you are come to take me away back to my own, own mamma; I will be so good, I will never tease her again, — never, never! I have been so wretched!”

"Sit down, and tell me what they have done to you," said Philip, checking the rising heart that heaved at his mother's name.

So, there they sat, on the cold stone under the stranger's porch, these two orphans, — Philip's arms round his brother's waist, Sidney leaning on his shoulder, and imparting to him — perhaps with pardonable exaggeration — all the sufferings he had gone through; and when he came to that morning's chastisement, and showed the wale across the little hands which he had vainly held up in supplication, Philip's passion shook him from limb to limb. His impulse was to march straight into Mr. Morton's shop and gripe him by the throat; and the indignation he betrayed encouraged Sidney to colour yet more highly the tale of his wrongs and pain.

When he had done, and clinging tightly to his brother's broad chest, said, "But never mind, Philip; now we will go home to Mamma," —

Philip replied, "Listen to me, my dear brother. We cannot go back to our mother. I will tell you why, later. We are alone in the world, we two! If you will come with me, God help you! — for you will have many hardships; we shall have to work and drudge, and you may be cold and hungry, and tired, very often, Sidney, — very, very often! But you know that, long ago, when I was so passionate, I never was wilfully unkind to you; and I declare now that I would bite out my tongue rather than it should say a harsh word to you. That is all I can promise. Think well. Will you never miss all the comforts you have now?"

"Comforts!" repeated Sidney, ruefully, and looking at the wale over his hands. "Oh! let — let — let me go with you; I shall die if I stay here. I shall indeed, indeed!"

"Hush!" said Philip; for at that moment a step was heard, and the pale gentleman walked slowly down the passage, and started and turned his head wistfully as he looked at the boys.

When he was gone, Philip rose.

"It is settled, then," said he, firmly. "Come with me at once. You shall return to their roof no more. Come, quick; we shall have many miles to go to-night."

CHAPTER VI.

He comes,
Yet careless what he brings; his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn;
And having dropped the expected bag, pass on, --
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.

COWPER: *Description of the Postman.*

THE pale gentleman entered Mr. Morton's shop; and looking round him, spied the worthy trader showing shawls to a young lady just married. He seated himself on a stool, and said to the bowing foreman, —

"I will wait till Mr. Morton is disengaged."

The young lady having closely examined seven shawls, and declared they were beautiful, said she would think of it, and walked away. Mr. Morton now approached the stranger.

"Mr. Morton," said the pale gentleman, "you are very little altered. You do not recollect me?"

"Bless me, Mr. Spencer! is it really you? Well, what a time since we met! I am very glad to see you. And what brings you to N——, — business?"

"Yes, business. Let us go within."

Mr. Morton led the way to the parlour, where Master Tom, re-perched on the stool, was rapidly digesting the plundered muffin. Mr. Morton dismissed him to play, and the pale gentleman took a chair.

"Mr. Morton," said he, glancing over his dress, "you see I am in mourning. It is for your sister. I never got the better of that early attachment, — never."

"My sister! Good heavens!" said Mr. Morton, turning very pale; "is she dead? Poor Catherine! and I not know of it! When did she die?"

"Not many days since; and — and —" said Mr. Spencer, greatly affected, "I fear in want. I had been abroad for some months; on my return last week, looking over the newspapers

(for I always order them to be filed), I read the short account of her lawsuit against Mr. Beaufort, some time back. I resolved to find her out. I did so through the solicitor she employed. It was too late; I arrived at her lodgings two days after her — her burial. I then determined to visit poor Catherine's brother, and learn if anything could be done for the children she had left behind."

"She left but two. Philip, the elder, is very comfortably placed at R——; the younger has his home with me; and Mrs. Morton is a moth,—that is to say, she takes great pains with him. Ehem! And my poor, poor sister!"

"Is he like his mother?"

"Very much, when she was young; poor dear Catherine!"

"What age is he?"

"About ten, perhaps; I don't know exactly; much younger than the other. And so she's dead!"

"Mr. Morton, I am an old bachelor" (here a sickly smile crossed Mr. Spencer's face); "a small portion of my fortune is settled, it is true, on my relations; but the rest is mine, and I live within my income. The elder of these boys is probably old enough to begin to take care of himself. But, the younger—perhaps you have a family of your own, and can spare *him*?"

Mr. Morton hesitated, and twitched up his trousers.

"Why," said he, "this is very kind in you. I don't know; we'll see. The boy is out now; come and dine with us at two,—pot-luck. Well, so she is no more! Heigho! Meanwhile, I'll talk it over with Mrs. M."

"I will be with you," said Mr. Spencer, rising.

"Ah," sighed Mr. Morton, "if Catherine had but married you she would have been a happy woman!"

"I would have tried to make her so," said Mr. Spencer, as he turned away his face and took his departure.

Two o'clock came; but no Sidney. They had sent to the place whither he had been despatched; he had never arrived there. Mr. Morton grew alarmed; and when Mr. Spencer came to dinner, his host was gone in search of the truant. He did not return till three. Doomed that day to be belated

both at breakfast and dinner, this decided him to part with Sidney whenever he should be found. Mrs. Morton was persuaded that the child only sulked, and would come back fast enough when he was hungry. Mr. Spencer tried to believe her, and ate his mutton, which was burnt to a cinder; but when five, six, seven o'clock came, and the boy was still missing, even Mrs. Morton agreed that it was high time to institute a regular search. The whole family set off different ways. It was ten o'clock before they were reunited; and then all the news picked up was that a boy answering Sidney's description had been seen with a young man in three several parts of the town; the last time at the outskirts, on the high road towards the manufacturing districts. These tidings so far relieved Mr. Morton's mind that he dismissed the chilling fear that had crept there, — that Sidney might have drowned himself. Boys *will* drown themselves sometimes! The description of the young man coincided so remarkably with the fellow-passenger of Mr. Spencer, that he did not doubt it was the same; the more so when he recollected having seen him with a fair-haired child under the portico; and, yet more, when he recalled the likeness to Catherine that had struck him in the coach, and caused the inquiry that had roused Philip's suspicion. The mystery was thus made clear, — Sidney had fled with his brother. Nothing more, however, could be done that night. The next morning, active measures should be devised; and when the morning came, the mail brought to Mr. Morton the two following letters. The first was from Arthur Beaufort.

SIR, — I have been prevented by severe illness from writing to you before. I can now scarcely hold a pen; but the instant my health is recovered I shall be with you at N —.

On her deathbed, the mother of the boy under your charge, Sidney Morton, committed him solemnly to me. I make his fortunes my care, and shall hasten to claim him at your kindly hands. But the elder son — this poor Philip, who has suffered so unjustly, — for our lawyer has seen Mr. Plaskwith, and heard the whole story — what has become of *him*? All our inquiries have failed to track him. Alas! I was too ill to institute them myself while it was yet time. Perhaps he may have sought shelter with you, his uncle; if so, assure him that he is in no danger from

the pursuit of the law, that his innocence is fully recognized, and that my father and myself implore him to accept our affection. I can write no more now; but in a few days I shall hope to see you.

I am, sir, etc.,

ARTHUR BEAUFORT.

BERKELEY SQUARE.

The second letter was from Mr. Plaskwith, and ran thus:—

DEAR MORTON, — Something very awkward has happened, — not my fault, and very unpleasant for me. Your relation, Philip, as I wrote you word, was a painstaking lad, though odd and bad mannered, — for want, perhaps, poor boy! of being taught better, and Mrs. P. is, you know, a very genteel woman, — women go too much by manners, — so she never took much to him. However, to the point, as the French emperor used to say: one evening he asked me for money for his mother, who, he said, was ill, in a very insolent way, — I may say threatening. It was in my own shop, and before Plimmins and Mrs. P. I was forced to answer with dignified rebuke, and left the shop. When I returned, he was gone, and some shillings — fourteen, I think, and three sovereigns — evidently from the till, scattered on the floor. Mrs. P. and Mr. Plimmins were very much frightened, thought it was clear I was robbed, and that we were to be murdered. Plimmins slept below that night, and we borrowed butcher Johnson's dog. Nothing happened. I did not think I was robbed; because the money, when we came to calculate, was all right. I know human nature: he had thought to take it, but repented, — quite clear. However, I was naturally very angry, thought he'd come back again, meant to reprove him properly, waited several days, heard nothing of him, grew uneasy, would not attend longer to Mrs. P.; for, as Napoleon Buonaparte observed, "Women are well in *their* way, not in *ours*." Made Plimmins go with me to town. Hired a Bow street runner to track him out, cost me £1, 1s. and two glasses of brandy and water. Poor Mrs. Morton was just buried. Quite shocked! Suddenly saw the boy in the streets. Plimmins rushed forward in the kindest way, was knocked down, hurt his arm, paid 2s. 6d. for lotion. Philip ran off, we ran after him; could not find him; forced to return home. Next day, a lawyer from a Mr. Beaufort — Mr. George Blackwell, a gentlemanlike man — called. Mr. Beaufort will do anything for him in reason. Is there anything more I can do? I really am very uneasy about the lad, and Mrs. P. and I have a tiff about it: but that's nothing; thought I had best write to you for instructions.

Yours truly,

C. PLASKWITH.

P.S. Just open my letter to say, Bow Street officer just been here, has found out that the boy has been seen with a very suspicious character. They think he has left London. Bow street officer wants to go after him, very expensive: so now you can decide.

Mr. Spencer scarcely listened to Mr. Plaskwith's letter, but of Arthur's he felt jealous. He would fain have been the only protector to Catherine's children; but he was the last man fitted to head the search now so necessary to prosecute with equal tact and energy.

A soft-hearted, soft-headed man, a confirmed valetudinarian, a day-dreamer, who had wasted away his life in dawdling and maundering over Simple Poetry, and sighing over his unhappy attachment; no child, no babe, was more thoroughly helpless than Mr. Spencer.

The task of investigation devolved, therefore, on Mr. Morton, and he went about it in a regular, plain, straightforward way. Hand-bills were circulated, constables employed, and a lawyer, accompanied by Mr. Spencer, despatched to the manufacturing districts towards which the orphans had been seen to direct their path.

CHAPTER VII.

GIVE the gentle South
Yet leave to court those sails.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *Beggar's Bush*.

Cut your cloth, sir,
According to your calling. — *Ibid.*

MEANWHILE the brothers were far away, and He who feeds the young ravens made their paths pleasant to their feet. Philip had broken to Sidney the sad news of their mother's death, and Sidney had wept with bitter passion. But children — what can *they* know of death? Their tears over graves

dry sooner than the dews. It is melancholy to compare the depth, the endurance, the far-sighted, anxious, prayerful love of a parent with the inconsiderate, frail, and evanescent affection of the infant, whose eyes the hues of the butterfly yet dazzle with delight. It was the night of their flight, and in the open air, when Philip (his arms round Sidney's waist) told his brother-orphan that they were motherless. And the air was balmy, the skies filled with the effulgent presence of the August moon; the cornfields stretched round them wide and far, and not a leaf trembled on the beech-tree beneath which they had sought shelter. It seemed as if Nature herself smiled pityingly on their young sorrow, and said to them, "Grieve not for the dead; I, who live forever, *I* will be your mother!"

They crept, as the night deepened, into the warmer sleeping-place afforded by stacks of hay, mown that summer and still fragrant; and the next morning the birds woke them betimes, to feel that Liberty, at least, was with them, and to wander with her at will.

Who in his boyhood has not felt the delight of freedom and adventure, — to have the world of woods and sward before him; to escape restriction; to lean, for the first time, on his own resources; to rejoice in the wild but manly luxury of independence; to act the Crusoe, and to fancy a Friday in every footprint, an island of his own in every field? Yes, in spite of their desolation, their loss, of the melancholy past, of the friendless future, the orphans were happy, — happy in their youth, their freedom, their love, their wanderings in the delicious air of the glorious August. Sometimes they came upon knots of reapers lingering in the shade of the hedgerows over their noonday meal; and, grown sociable by travel and bold by safety, they joined and partook of the rude fare with the zest of fatigue and youth. Sometimes, too, at night, they saw gleam afar and red by the wood-side the fires of gypsy tents. But these, with the superstition derived from old nursery-tales, they scrupulously shunned, eying them with a mysterious awe! What heavenly twilights belong to that golden month! — the air so lucidly serene, as

the purple of the clouds fades gradually away, and up soars, broad, round, intense, and luminous, the full moon which belongs to the joyous season! The fields then are greener than in the heats of July and June, — they have got back the luxury of a second spring; and still, beside the paths of the travellers, lingered on the hedges the clustering honeysuckle, the convolvulus glittered in the tangles of the brake, the hardy heath-flower smiled on the green waste.

And ever, at evening, they came, field after field, upon those circles which recall to children so many charmed legends, and are fresh and frequent in that month, — the Fairy Rings! They thought, poor boys! that it was a good omen, and half fancied that the Fairies protected them, as in the old time they had often protected the desolate and outcast.

They avoided the main roads, and all towns, with suspicious care; but sometimes they paused, for food and rest, at the obscure hostel of some scattered hamlet, though more often they loved to spread the simple food they purchased by the way under some thick tree, or beside a stream through whose limpid waters they could watch the trout glide and play; and they often preferred the chance shelter of a haystack or a shed to the less romantic repose offered by the small inns they alone dared to enter. They went in this much by the face and voice of the host or hostess. Once only Philip had entered a town, on the second day of their flight, and that solely for the purchase of ruder clothes, and a change of linen for Sidney, with some articles and implements of use necessary in their present course of shift and welcome hardship. A wise precaution; for, thus clad, they escaped suspicion.

So journeying, they consumed several days; and having taken a direction quite opposite to that which led to the manufacturing districts, whither pursuit had been directed, they were now in the centre of another county, in the neighbourhood of one of the most considerable towns of England; and here Philip began to think their wanderings ought to cease, and it was time to settle on some definite course of life. He had carefully hoarded about his person, and most thriftily

managed, the little fortune bequeathed by his mother. But Philip looked on this capital as a deposit sacred to Sidney; it was not to be spent, but kept and augmented, — the nucleus for future wealth. Within the last few weeks his character was greatly ripened, and his powers of thought enlarged. He was no more a boy, — he was a man; he had another life to take care of. He resolved, then, to enter the town they were approaching, and to seek for some situation by which he might maintain both. Sidney was very loath to abandon their present roving life; but he allowed that the warm weather could not always last, and that in winter the fields would be less pleasant. He, therefore, with a sigh, yielded to his brother's reasonings.

They entered the fair and busy town of — one day at noon; and, after finding a small lodging, at which he deposited Sidney, who was fatigued with their day's walk, Philip sallied forth alone.

After his long rambling, Philip was pleased and struck with the broad bustling streets, the gay shops, — the evidences of opulence and trade. He thought it hard if he could not find there a market for the health and heart of sixteen. He strolled slowly and alone along the streets, till his attention was caught by a small corner shop, in the window of which was placed a board, bearing this inscription: —

OFFICE FOR EMPLOYMENT. — RECIPROCAL ADVANTAGE.

Mr. John Clump's bureau open every day, from ten till four. Clerks, servants, labourers, etc., provided with suitable situations. Terms moderate. N.B. — The oldest established office in the town.

Wanted, a good cook. An undergardener.

What he sought was here! Philip entered, and saw a short, fat man with spectacles, seated before a desk, poring upon the well-filled leaves of a long register.

"Sir," said Philip, "I wish for a situation. I don't care what."

"Half-a-crown for entry, if you please. That's right. Now for particulars. Hum! you don't look like a servant!"

"No; I wish for any place where my education can be of use. I can read and write; I know Latin and French; I can draw; I know arithmetic and summing."

"Very well; very genteel young man, prepossessing appearance (that's a fudge!), highly educated; usher in a school, eh?"

"What you like."

"References?"

"I have none."

"Eh! none?" and Mr. Clump fixed his spectacles full upon Philip.

Philip was prepared for the question, and had the sense to perceive that a frank reply was his best policy. "The fact is," said he, boldly, "I was well brought up; my father died; I was to be bound apprentice to a trade I disliked; I left it, and have now no friends."

"If I can help you, I will," said Mr. Clump, coldly. "Can't promise much. If you were a labourer, character might not matter; but educated young men must have a character. Hands always more useful than head. Education no avail nowadays; common, quite common. Call again on Monday."

Somewhat disappointed and chilled, Philip turned from the bureau; but he had a strong confidence in his own resources, and recovered his spirits as he mingled with the throng. He passed, at length, by a livery-stable, and paused, from old associations, as he saw a groom in the mews attempting to manage a young, hot horse, evidently unbroken. The master of the stables, in a green short jacket and top-boots, with a long whip in his hand, was standing by, with one or two men who looked like horse-dealers.

"Come off, clumsy! you can't manage that 'ere fine hani-mal," cried the liveryman. "Ah! he's a lamb, sir, if he were backed properly; but I has not a man in the yard as can ride since Will died. Come off, I say, lubber!"

But to come off, without being thrown off, was more easily said than done. The horse was now plunging as if Juno had sent her gadfly to him; and Philip, interested and excited, came nearer and nearer, till he stood by the side of the horse-

dealers. The other hostlers ran to the help of their comrade, who at last, with white lips and shaking knees, found himself on *terra firma*; while the horse, snorting hard, and rubbing his head against the breast and arms of the hostler, who held him tightly by the rein, seemed to ask, in his own way, "Are there any more of you?"

A suspicion that the horse was an old acquaintance crossed Philip's mind; he went up to him, and a white spot over the left eye confirmed his doubts. It had been a foal reserved and reared for his own riding! one that, in his prosperous days, had eaten bread from his hand, and followed him round the paddock like a dog; one that he had mounted in sport, without saddle, when his father's back was turned; a friend, in short, of the happy *lang syne*, — nay, the very friend to whom he had boasted his affection, when, standing with Arthur Beaufort under the summer sky, the whole world seemed to him full of friends. He put his hand on the horse's neck, and whispered, "Soho! So, Billy!" and the horse turned sharp round with a quick joyous neigh.

"If you please, sir," said Philip, appealing to the liveryman, "I will undertake to ride this horse, and take him over you leaping-bar. Just let me try him."

"There's a fine-spirited lad for you!" said the liveryman, much pleased at the offer. "Now, gentlemen, did I not tell you that 'ere hanimal had no vice if he was properly managed?"

The horse-dealers shook their heads.

"May I give him some bread first?" asked Philip; and the hostler was despatched to the house. Meanwhile the animal evinced various signs of pleasure and recognition, as Philip stroked and talked to him; and, finally, when he ate the bread from the young man's hand, the whole yard seemed in as much delight and surprise as if they had witnessed one of M. Van Amburgh's exploits.

And now, Philip, still caressing the horse, slowly and cautiously mounted; the animal made one bound half-across the yard, — a bound which sent all the horse-dealers into a corner, — and then went through his paces, one after the

other, with as much ease and calm as if he had been broken in at Mr. Fozard's to carry a young lady. And when he crowned all by going thrice over the leaping-bar, and Philip, dismounting, threw the reins to the hostler, and turned triumphantly to the horse-dealer, that gentleman slapped him on the back, and said emphatically, "Sir, you are a man! and I am proud to see you here."

Meanwhile the horse-dealers gathered round the animal; looked at his hoofs, felt his legs, examined his windpipe, and concluded the bargain, which, but for Philip, would have been very abruptly broken off. When the horse was led out of the yard, the liveryman, Mr. Stubmore, turned to Philip, who, leaning against the wall, followed the poor animal with mournful eyes.

"My good sir, you have sold that horse for me, that you have! Anything as I can do for you? One good turn deserves another. Here's a brace of shiners."

"Thank you, sir! I want no money, but I do want some employment. I can be of use to you, perhaps, in your establishment. I have been brought up among horses all my life."

"Saw it, sir! that's very clear. I say, that 'ere horse knows you!" and the dealer put his finger to his nose. "Quite right to be mum! He was bred by an old customer of mine, — famous rider! — Mr. Beaufort. Aha! that's where you knew him, I s'pose. Were you in his stables?"

"Hem, I knew Mr. Beaufort well."

"Did you? You could not know a better man. Well, I shall be very glad to engage you, though you seem by your hands to be a bit of a gentleman, eh? Never mind; don't want you to groom, but superintend things. D'ye know accounts, eh?"

"Yes."

"Character?"

Philip repeated to Mr. Stubmore the story he had imparted to Mr. Clump. Somehow or other, men who live much with horses are always more lax in their notions than the rest of mankind. Mr. Stubmore did not seem to grow more distant at Philip's narration.

"Understand you perfectly, my man. Brought up with them 'ere fine creturs, how could you nail your nose to a desk? I'll take you without more palaver. What's your name?"

"Philips."

"Come to-morrow, and we'll settle about wages. Sleep here?"

"No. I have a brother whom I must lodge with, and for whose sake I wish to work. I should not like him to be at the stables, he is too young. But I can come early every day, and go home late."

"Well, just as you like, man. Good day."

And thus, not from any mental accomplishment, not from the result of his intellectual education, but from the mere physical capacity and brute habit of sticking fast on his saddle, did Philip Morton, in this great, intelligent, gifted, civilized, enlightened community of Great Britain, find the means of earning his bread without stealing it.

CHAPTER VIII.

Don Salluste (souriant). Je parie
Que vous ne pensiez pas à moi ? — *Ruy Blas.*

Don Salluste. Cousin !
Don César. De vos bienfaits je n'aurai nulle envie,
Tant que je trouverai vivant ma libre vie.¹ — *Ibid.*

PHILIP's situation was agreeable to his habits. His great courage and skill in horsemanship were not the only qualifications useful to Mr. Stubmore; his education answered a useful

¹ "Don Sallust (smiling). I'll lay a wager you won't think of me ?"

"Don Sallust. Cousin !

Don César. I covet not your favors, so but I lead an independent life."

purpose in accounts, and his manners and appearance were highly to the credit of the yard. The customers and loungers soon grew to like Gentleman Philips, as he was styled in the establishment. Mr. Stubmore conceived a real affection for him. So passed several weeks; and Philip, in this humble capacity, might have worked out his destinies in peace and comfort, but for a new cause of vexation that arose in Sidney. This boy was all in all to his brother. For him he had resisted the hearty and joyous invitations of Gawtreys (whose gay manner and high spirits had, it must be owned, captivated his fancy, despite the equivocal mystery of the man's avocations and condition); for him he now worked and toiled, cheerful and contented; and him he sought to save from all to which he subjected himself. He could not bear that that soft and delicate child should ever be exposed to the low and menial associations that now made up his own life, — to the obscene slang of grooms and hostlers, to their coarse manners and rough contact. He kept him, therefore, apart and aloof in their little lodging, and hoped in time to lay by, so that Sidney might ultimately be restored, if not to his bright original sphere, at least to a higher grade than that to which Philip was himself condemned. But poor Sidney could not bear to be thus left alone, to lose sight of his brother from daybreak till bed-time, to have no one to amuse him; he fretted and pined away. All the little inconsiderate selfishness, uneradicated from his breast by his sufferings, broke out the more, the more he felt that he was the first object on earth to Philip. Philip, thinking he might be more cheerful at a day-school, tried the experiment of placing him at one where the boys were much of his own age; but Sidney, on the third day, came back with a black eye, and he would return no more. Philip several times thought of changing their lodging for one where there were young people; but Sidney had taken a fancy to the kind old widow who was their landlady, and cried at the thought of removal. Unfortunately, the old woman was deaf and rheumatic; and though she bore teasing *ad libitum* she could not entertain the child long on a stretch. Too young to be reasonable, Sidney could not, or would not,

comprehend why his brother was so long away from him; and once he said, peevishly, —

“If I had thought I was to be moped up so, I would not have left Mrs. Morton. Tom was a bad boy, but still it was somebody to play with. I wish I had not gone away with you!”

This speech cut Philip to the heart. What, then, he had taken from the child a respectable and safe shelter, — the sure provision of a life, — and the child now reproached him! When this was said to him, the tears gushed from his eyes.

“God forgive me, Sidney,” said he, and turned away.

But then Sidney, who had the most endearing ways with him, seeing his brother so vexed, ran up and kissed him, and scolded himself for being naughty. Still the words were spoken, and their meaning rankled deep. Philip himself, too, was morbid in his excessive tenderness for this boy. There is a certain age, before the love for the other sex commences, when the feeling of friendship is almost a passion. You see it constantly in girls and boys at school. It is the first vague craving of the heart after the master food of human life, — Love. It has its jealousies and humours and caprices like love itself. Philip was painfully acute to Sidney’s affection, was jealous of every particle of it. He dreaded lest his brother should ever be torn from him.

He would start from his sleep at night, and go to Sidney’s bed to see that he was there. He left him in the morning with forebodings, he returned in the dark with fear. Meanwhile the character of this young man, so sweet and tender to Sidney, was gradually becoming more hard and stern to others. He had now climbed to the post of command in that rude establishment; and premature command in any sphere tends to make men unsocial and imperious.

One day Mr. Stubmore called him into his own counting-house, where stood a gentleman, with one hand in his coat-pocket, the other tapping his whip against his boot.

“Philips, show this gentleman the brown mare. She is a beauty in harness, is she not? This gentleman wants a match for his pheonon.”

"She must step very hoigh," said the gentleman, turning round: and Philip recognized the beau in the stage-coach.

The recognition was simultaneous. The beau nodded, then whistled, and winked.

"Come, my man, I am at your service," said he.

Philip, with many misgivings, followed him across the yard. The gentleman then beckoned him to approach.

"You, sir, — moind I never peach, — setting up here in the honest line? Dull work, honesty, eh?"

"Sir, I really don't know you."

"Daun't you recollect old Greggs, the evening you came there with jolly Bill Gawtrety? Recollect that, eh?"

Philip was mute.

"I was among the gentlemen in the back parlour who shook you by the hand. Bill 's off to France, then. I am tauking the provinces. I want a good horse, the best in the yard, moind! Cutting such a swell here! My name is Captain de Burgh Smith; never moind yours, my fine faellow. Now then, out with your rattlers and keep your tongue in your mouth."

Philip mechanically ordered out the brown mare, which Captain Smith did not seem much to approve of; and after glancing round the stables with great disdain of the collection, he sauntered out of the yard without saying more to Philip, though he stopped and spoke a few sentences to Mr. Stubmore. Philip hoped he had no design of purchasing, and that he was rid, for the present, of so awkward a customer. Mr. Stubmore approached Philip.

"Drive over the grays to Sir John," said he. "My lady wants a pair to job. A very pleasant man, that Captain Smith. I did not know you had been in a yard before, says you were the pet at Elmore's in London. Served him many a day. Pleasant, gentlemanlike man!"

"Y—e—s!" said Philip, hardly knowing what he said, and hurrying back into the stables to order out the grays.

The place to which he was bound was some miles distant, and it was sunset when he returned. As he drove into the main street, two men observed him closely.

"That is he! I am almost sure it is," said one.

"Oh, then it's all smooth sailing," replied the other.

"But, bless my eyes! you must be mistaken! See whom he's talking to now!"

At that moment Captain de Burgh Smith, mounted on the brown mare, stopped Philip.

"Well, you see, I've bought her, — hope she'll turn out well. What do you really think she's worth? Not to buy, but to sell?"

"Sixty guineas."

"Well, that's a good day's work; and I owe it to you. The old faellow would not have trusted me if you had not served me at Elmore's, ha, ha! If he gets scent and looks shy at you, my lad, come to me. I'm at the Star Hotel for the next few days. I want a tight faellow like you, and you shall have a fair percentage. I'm none of your stingy ones. I say, I hope this devil is quiet? She cocks up her ears dawnsably!"

"Look you, sir!" said Philip, very gravely, and rising up in his break; "I know very little of you, and that little is not much to your credit. I give you fair warning that I shall caution my employer against you."

"Will you, my fine faellow? Then take care of yourself."

"Stay, and if you dare utter a word against me," said Philip, with that frown to which his swarthy complexion and flashing eyes gave an expression of fierce power beyond his years, "you will find that, as I am the last to care for a threat, so I am the first to resent an injury!"

Thus saying, he drove on. Captain Smith affected a cough, and put his brown mare into a canter. The two men followed Philip as he drove into the yard.

"What do you know against the person he spoke to?" said one of them.

"Merely that he is one of the cunningest swells on this side the Bay," returned the other. "It looks bad for your young friend."

The first speaker shook his head and made no reply.

On gaining the yard, Philip found that Mr. Stubmore had

gone out, and was not expected home till the next day. He had some relations who were farmers, whom he often visited; to them he was probably gone.

Philip, therefore, deferring his intended caution against the gay captain till the morrow, and musing how the caution might be most discreetly given, walked homeward. He had just entered the lane that led to his lodgings, when he saw the two men I have spoken of on the other side of the street. The taller and better-dressed of the two left his comrade, and crossing over to Philip, bowed, and thus accosted him, —

“Fine evening, Mr. Philip Morton. I am rejoiced to see you at last. You remember me, — Mr. Blackwell, Lincoln’s Inn.”

“What is your business?” said Philip, halting, and speaking short and fiercely.

“Now don’t be in a passion, my dear sir, — now don’t. I am here on behalf of my clients, Messrs. Beaufort, senior and junior. I have had such work to find you! Dear, dear! but you are a sly one! Ha, ha! Well, you see we have settled that little affair of Plaskwith’s for you (might have been ugly), and now I hope you will —”

“To your business, sir! What do you want with me?”

“Why, now, don’t be so quick! ’Tis not the way to do business. Suppose you step to my hotel. A glass of wine now, Mr. Philip! We shall soon understand each other.”

“Out of my path, or speak plainly!”

Thus put to it, the lawyer, casting a glance at his stout companion, who appeared to be contemplating the sunset on the other side of the way, came at once to the marrow of his subject.

“Well, then, — well, my say is soon said. Mr. Arthur Beaufort takes a most lively interest in you; it is he who has directed this inquiry. He bids me say that he shall be most happy — yes, most happy — to serve you in anything; and if you will but see him (he is in the town), I am sure you will be charmed with him, — most amiable young man!”

“Look you, sir,” said Philip, drawing himself up: “neither from father, nor from son, nor from one of that family, on

whose heads rest the mother's death and the orphans' curse, will I ever accept boon or benefit; with them, voluntarily, I will hold no communion; if they force themselves in my path, let them beware! I am earning my bread in the way I desire; I am independent; I want them not. Begone!"

With that, Philip pushed aside the lawyer and strode on rapidly. Mr. Blackwell, abashed and perplexed, returned to his companion.

Philip regained his home, and found Sidney stationed at the window alone, and with wistful eyes noting the flight of the gray moths, as they darted to and fro across the dull shrubs, that, variegated with lines for washing, adorned the plot of ground which the landlady called a garden. The elder brother had returned at an earlier hour than usual, and Sidney did not at first perceive him enter. When he did he clapped his hands, and ran to him.

"This is so good in you, Philip. I have been so dull; you will come and play now?"

"With all my heart. Where shall we play?" said Philip, with a cheerful smile.

"Oh, in the garden! it's such a nice time for hide and seek."

"But is it not chill and damp for you?" said Philip.

"There now; you are always making excuses. I see you don't like it. I have no heart to play now."

Sidney seated himself and pouted.

"Poor Sidney! you *must* be dull without me. Yes, let us play; but put on this handkerchief;" and Philip took off his own cravat and tied it round his brother's neck, and kissed him.

Sidney, whose anger seldom lasted long, was reconciled; and they went into the garden to play. It was a little spot, screened by an old moss-grown paling from the neighbouring garden on the one side and a lane on the other. They played with great glee till the night grew darker and the dews heavier.

"This must be the last time," cried Philip. "It is my turn to hide."

"Very well! Now, then."

Philip secreted himself behind a poplar; and as Sidney searched for him, and Philip stole round and round the tree, the latter, happening to look across the paling, saw the dim outline of a man's figure in the lane, who appeared watching them. A thrill shot across his breast. These Beauforts, associated in his thoughts with every evil omen and augury, had they set a spy upon his movements? He remained erect and gazing at the form, when Sidney discovered, and ran up to him, with his noisy laugh.

As the child clung to him, shouting with gladness, Philip, unheeding his playmate, called aloud and imperiously to the stranger, —

"What are you gaping at? Why do you stand watching us?"

The man muttered something, moved on, and disappeared.

"I hope there are no thieves here! I am so much afraid of thieves," said Sidney, tremulously.

The fear grated on Philip's heart. Had he not himself, perhaps, been judged and treated as a thief? He said nothing, but drew his brother within; and there, in their little room, by the one poor candle, it was touching and beautiful to see these boys, — the tender patience of the elder lending itself to every whim of the younger, now building houses with cards, now telling stories of fairy and knight-errant, the sprightliest he could remember or invent. At length, as all was over, and Sidney was undressing for the night, Philip, standing apart, said to him in a mournful voice, —

"Are you sad now, Sidney?"

"No! not when you are with me; but that is so seldom."

"Do you read none of the story-books I bought for you?"

"Sometimes! but one can't read all day."

"Ah, Sidney, if ever we should part, perhaps you will love me no longer!"

"Don't say so," said Sidney. "But we sha'n't part, Philip."

Philip sighed, and turned away as his brother leaped into

bed. Something whispered to him that danger was near; and as it was, could Sidney grow up neglected and uneducated; was it thus that he was to fulfil his trust?

CHAPTER IX.

BUT oh, what storm was in that mind! — CRABBE: *Ruth*.

WHILE Philip mused, and his brother fell into the happy sleep of childhood, in a room in the principal hotel of the town sat three persons, Arthur Beaufort, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Blackwell.

"And so," said the first, "he rejected every overture from the Beauforts?"

"With a scorn I cannot convey to you!" replied the lawyer. "But the fact is, that he is evidently a lad of low habits; to think of his being a sort of helper to a horse-dealer! I suppose, sir, he was always in the stables in his father's time. Bad company depraves the taste very soon; but that is not the worst. Sharp declares that the man he was talking with, as I told you, is a common swindler. Depend on it, Mr. Arthur, *he* is incorrigible; all we can do is to save the brother."

"It is too dreadful to contemplate!" said Arthur, who, still ill and languid, reclined on a sofa.

"It is, indeed," said Mr. Spencer; "I am sure I should not know what to do with such a character; but the other poor child, — it would be a mercy to get hold of *him*."

"Where is Mr. Sharp?" asked Arthur.

"Why," said the lawyer, "he has followed Philip at a distance to find out his lodgings, and learn if his brother is with him. Oh, here he is!" and Blackwell's companion in the earlier part of the evening entered.

"I have found him out, sir," said Mr. Sharp, wiping his forehead. "What a fierce 'un he is. I thought he would have

had a stone at my head; but we officers are used to it; we does our duty, and Providence makes our heads unkimmon hard!"

"Is the child with him?" asked Mr. Spencer.

"Yes, sir."

"A little, quiet, subdued boy?" asked the melancholy inhabitant of the Lakes.

"Quiet! Lord love you! never heard a noisier little urchin! There they were romping and rousing in the garden, like a couple of jail-birds."

"You see," groaned Mr. Spencer, "he will make that poor child as bad as himself."

"What shall us do, Mr. Blackwell?" asked Sharp, who longed for his brandy and water.

"Why, I was thinking you might go to the horse-dealer the first thing in the morning; find out whether Philip is really thick with the swindler; and, perhaps, Mr. Stubmore may have some influence with him, if, without saying who he is —"

"Yes," interrupted Arthur, "do not expose his name."

"You could still hint that he ought to be induced to listen to his friends and go with them. Mr. Stubmore may be a respectable man, and —"

"I understand," said Sharp; "I have no doubt as how I can settle it. We learns to know human natur in our perference; 'cause why? we gets at its blind side. Good night, gentlemen!"

"You seem very pale, Mr. Arthur; you had better go to bed; you promised your father, you know."

"Yes, I am not well; I will go to bed;" and Arthur rose, lighted his candle, and sought his room.

"I will see Philip to-morrow," he said to himself; "he will listen to *me*."

The conduct of Arthur Beaufort in executing the charge he had undertaken had brought into full light all the most amiable and generous part of his character. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he had expressed so much anxiety as to the fate of the orphans, that to quiet him his father was forced to send for Mr. Blackwell. The lawyer had ascertained,

through Dr. —, the name of Philip's employer at R—. At Arthur's request he went down to Mr. Plaskwith; and arriving there the day after the return of the bookseller, learned those particulars with which Mr. Plaskwith's letter to Roger Morton has already made the reader acquainted. The lawyer then sent for Mr. Sharp, the officer before employed, and commissioned him to track the young man's whereabouts. That shrewd functionary soon reported that a youth every way answering to Philip's description had been introduced the night of the escape by a man celebrated, not indeed for robberies or larcenies or crimes of the coarser kind, but for address in all that more large and complex character which comes under the denomination of living upon one's wits, to a polite rendezvous frequented by persons of a similar profession. Since then, however, all clew of Philip was lost. But though Mr. Blackwell, in the way of his profession, was thus publicly benevolent towards the fugitive, he did not the less privately represent to his patrons, senior and junior, the very equivocal character that Philip must be allowed to bear. Like most lawyers, hard upon all who wander from the formal tracks, he unaffectedly regarded Philip's flight and absence as proofs of a reprobate disposition; and this conduct was greatly aggravated in his eyes by Mr. Sharp's report, by which it appeared that after his escape Philip had so suddenly, and, as it were, so naturally, taken to such equivocal companionship. Mr. Robert Beaufort, already prejudiced against Philip, viewed matters in the same light as the lawyer; and the story of his supposed predilections reached Arthur's ears in so distorted a shape, that even he was staggered and revolted. Still Philip was so young, Arthur's oath to the orphans' mother so recent; and if thus early inclined to wrong courses, should not every effort be made to lure him back to the straight path? With these views and reasonings, as soon as he was able, Arthur himself visited Mrs. Lacy, and the note from Philip, which the good lady put into his hands, affected him deeply, and confirmed all his previous resolutions. Mrs. Lacy was very anxious to get at his name; but Arthur, having heard that Philip had refused all aid from his father and

Mr. Blackwell, thought that the young man's pride might work equally against himself, and therefore evaded the landlady's curiosity. He wrote the next day the letter we have seen to Mr. Roger Morton, whose address Catherine had given to him; and by return of post came a letter from the linen-draper narrating the flight of Sidney, as it was supposed with his brother. This news so excited Arthur, that he insisted on going down to N—— at once, and joining in the search. His father, alarmed for his health, positively refused; and the consequence was an increase of fever, a consultation with the doctors, and a declaration that Mr. Arthur was in that state that it would be dangerous not to let him have his own way. Mr. Beaufort was forced to yield, and with Blackwell and Mr. Sharp accompanied his son to N——. The inquiries, hitherto fruitless, then assumed a more regular and business-like character. By little and little they came, through the aid of Mr. Sharp, upon the right clew, up to a certain point. But here there was a double scent: two youths answering the description had been seen at a small village; then there came those who asserted that they had seen the same youths at a seaport in one direction; others who deposed to their having taken the road to an inland town in the other. This had induced Arthur and his father to part company. Mr. Beaufort, accompanied by Roger Morton, went to the seaport; and Arthur, with Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sharp, more fortunate, tracked the fugitives to their retreat. As for Mr. Beaufort, senior, now that his mind was more at ease about his son, he was thoroughly sick of the whole thing; greatly bored by the society of Mr. Morton; very much ashamed that he, so respectable and great a man, should be employed on such an errand; more afraid of than pleased with any chance of discovering the fierce Philip; and secretly resolved upon slinking back to London at the first reasonable excuse.

The next morning Mr. Sharp entered betimes Mr. Stubmore's counting-house. In the yard he caught a glimpse of Philip, and managed to keep himself unseen by that young gentleman.

"Mr. Stubmore, I think?"

"At your service, sir."

Mr. Sharp shut the glass door mysteriously, and lifting up the corner of a green curtain that covered the panes, beckoned to the startled Stubmore to approach.

"You see that 'ere young man in the velveteen jacket; you employs him?"

"I do, sir; he's my right hand."

"Well, now, don't be frightened, but his friends are arter him. He has got into bad ways, and we want you to give him a little good advice."

"Pooh! I know he has run away, like a fine-spirited lad as he is; and as long as he likes to stay with me, they as comes after him may get a ducking in the horse-trough!"

"Be you a father, — a father of a family, Mr. Stubmore?" said Sharp, thrusting his hands into his breeches pockets, swelling out his stomach, and pursing up his lips with great solemnity.

"Nonsense! no gammon with me! Take your chaff to the goslings. I tells you I can't do without that 'ere lad. Every man to himself."

"Oho!" thought Sharp, "I must change the tack. — Mr. Stubmore," said he, taking a stool, "you speaks like a sensible man. No one can reasonably go for to ask a gentleman to go for to inconvenience his-self. But what do you know of that 'ere youngster? Had you a *carakter* with him?"

"What's that to you?"

"Why, it's more to yourself, Mr. Stubmore. He is but a lad, and if he goes back to his friends they may take care of him; but he got into a bad set afore he come here. Do you know a good-looking chap with whiskers, who talks of his pheazton, and was riding last night on a brown mare?"

"Y—e—s!" said Mr. Stubmore, growing rather pale, "and I knows the mare, too. Why, sir, I sold him that mare!"

"Did he pay you for her?"

"Why, to be sure, he gave me a check on Coutts."

"And you took it! My eyes! what a flat!" Here Mr. Sharp closed the orbs he had invoked, and whistled with that

self-hugging delight which men invariably feel when another man is taken in.

Mr. Stubmore became evidently nervous.

"Why, what now; you don't think I'm done? I did not let him have the mare till I went to the hotel, found he was cutting a great dash there, a groom, a pheaton, and a fine horse, and as extravagant as the devil!"

"O Lord! O Lord! what a world this is! What does he call his-self?"

"Why, here's the check, — George Frederick de — de Burgh Smith."

"Put it in your pipe, my man, — put it in your pipe; not worth a d—!"

"And who the deuce are you, sir?" bawled out Mr. Stubmore, in an equal rage both with himself and his guest.

"I, sir," said the visitor, rising with great dignity, — "I, sir, am of the great Bow Street Office, and my name is John Sharp!"

Mr. Stubmore nearly fell off his stool, his eyes rolled in his head, and his teeth chattered. Mr. Sharp perceived the advantage he had gained, and continued, —

"Yes, sir; and I could have much to say against that chap, who is nothing more or less than Dashing Jerry, as has ruined more girls and more tradesmen than any lord in the land. And so I called to give you a bit of caution; for, says I to myself, 'Mr. Stubmore is a respectable man.'"

"I hope I am, sir," said the crest-fallen horsedealer; "that was always my character."

"And the father of a family?"

"Three boys and a babe at the buzzom," said Mr. Stubmore, pathetically.

"And he sha'n't be taken in if I can help it! That 'ere young man as I am arter, you see, knows Captain Smith. Ha, ha! smell a rat now, eh?"

"Captain Smith said he knew him — the wiper — and that's what made me so green."

"Well, we must not be hard on the youngster; 'cause why? he has friends as is gemmen. But you tell him to go back to

his poor dear relations, and all shall be forgiven; and say as how you won't keep him; and if he don't go back, he'll have to get his livelihood without a carakter; and use your influence with him like a man and a Christian, and what's more, like the father of a family, Mr. Stubmore, with three boys and a babe at the buzzom. You won't keep him now?"

"Keep him! I have had a precious escape. I'd better go and see after the mare."

"I doubt if you'll find her; the Captain caught a sight of me this morning. Why, he lodges at our hotel! He's off by this time!"

"And why the devil did you let him go?"

"'Cause I had no writ agin him!" said the Bow Street officer; and he walked straight out of the counting-office, satisfied that he had "done the job."

To snatch his hat, to run to the hotel, to find that Captain Smith had indeed gone off in his phaeton, bag and baggage, the same as he came, except that he had now two horses to the phaeton instead of one—having left with the landlord the amount of his bill in another check upon Coutts—was the work of five minutes with Mr. Stubmore. He returned home, panting and purple with indignation and wounded feeling.

"To think that chap, whom I took into my yard like a son, should have connived at this! 'Tain't the money; 'tis the willany that 'flicts me!" muttered Mr. Stubmore, as he re-entered the mews.

Here he came plump upon Philip, who said, —

"Sir, I wished to see you, to say that you had better take care of Captain Smith."

"Oh, you did, did you, now he's gone? 'sconded off to America, I dare say, by this time. Now look ye, young man: your friends are after you, I won't say anything agin you; but you go back to them, I wash my hands of you. Quite too much for me. There's your week, and never let me catch you in my yard agin, that's all!"

Philip dropped the money which Stubmore had put into his hand. "My friends! friends have been with you, have they? I thought so; I thank them. And so you part with me?"

Well, you have been very kind, very kind; let us part kindly;" and he held out his hand.

Mr. Stubmore was softened; he touched the hand held out to him, and looked doubtful a moment; but Captain de Burgh Smith's cheek for eighty guineas suddenly rose before his eyes. He turned on his heel abruptly, and said, over his shoulder, —

"Don't go after Captain Smith (he'll come to the gallows); mend your ways, and be ruled by your poor dear relatives, whose hearts you are breaking."

"Captain Smith! Did my relations tell you?"

"Yes, yes, they told me all; that is, they sent to tell me; so you see I'm d—d soft not to lay hold of you. But, perhaps, if they be gemmen, they'll act as sich, and cash me this here check!"

But the last words were said to air. Philip had rushed from the yard.

With a heaving breast, and every nerve in his body quivering with wrath, the proud, unhappy boy strode through the gay streets. They had betrayed him then, these accursed Beauforts! they circled his steps with schemes to drive him like a deer into the snare of their loathsome charity! The roof was to be taken from his head, the bread from his lips, so that he might fawn at their knees for bounty. "But they shall not break my spirit, nor steal away my curse. No, my dead mother, never!"

As he thus muttered, he passed through a patch of waste land that led to the row of houses in which his lodging was placed. And here a voice called to him, and a hand was laid on his shoulder. He turned, and Arthur Beaufort, who had followed him from the street, stood behind him. Philip did not, at the first glance, recognize his cousin; illness had so altered him, and his dress was so different from that in which he had first and last beheld him. The contrast between the two young men was remarkable. Philip was clad in a rough garb suited to his late calling, — a jacket of black velveteen, ill-fitting and ill-fashioned, loose fustian trousers, coarse shoes, his hat set deep over his pent eyebrows, his raven hair long

and neglected. He was just at that age when one with strong features and robust frame is at the worst in point of appearance, — the sinewy proportions not yet sufficiently fleshed, and seeming inharmonious and undeveloped, precisely in proportion, perhaps, to the symmetry towards which they insensibly mature; the contour of the face sharpened from the roundness of boyhood, and losing its bloom without yet acquiring that relief and shadow which make the expression and dignity of the masculine countenance. Thus accoutred, thus gaunt and uncouth, stood Morton. Arthur Beaufort, always refined in his appearance, seemed yet more so from the almost feminine delicacy which ill-health threw over his pale complexion and graceful figure; that sort of unconscious elegance which belongs to the dress of the rich when they are young — seen most in minutiae, not observable, perhaps, by themselves — marked forcibly and painfully the distinction of rank between the two. That distinction Beaufort did not feel; but at a glance it was visible to Philip.

The past rushed back on him. The sunny lawn, the gun offered and rejected, the pride of old, much less haughty than the pride of to-day.

"Philip," said Beaufort, feebly, "they tell me you will not accept any kindness from me or mine. Ah, if you knew how we have sought you!"

"Knew!" cried Philip, savagely, for that unlucky sentence recalled to him his late interview with his employer, and his present destitution. "Knew! And why have you dared to hunt me out, and halloo me down; why must this insolent tyranny, that assumes the right over these limbs and this free will, betray and expose me and my wretchedness wherever I turn?"

"Your poor mother —" began Beaufort.

"Name her not with your lips, name her not!" cried Philip, growing livid with his emotions. "Talk not of the mercy, the forethought, a Beaufort could show to her and her offspring! I accept it not, I believe it not! Oh, yes! you follow me now with your false kindness; and why? Because your father, your vain, hollow, heartless father —"

"Hold!" said Beaufort, in a tone of such reproach that it startled the wild heart on which it fell; "it is my father you speak of. Let the son respect the son."

"No, no, no! I will respect none of your race. I tell you your father fears me! I tell you that my last words to him ring in his ears! My wrongs! Arthur Beaufort, when you are absent I seek to forget them; in your abhorred presence they revive, they —"

He stopped, almost choked with his passion; but continued instantly, with equal intensity of fervour, —

"Were you free the gibbet, and to touch your hand could alone save me from it, I would scorn your aid. Aid! the very thought fires my blood and nerves my hand. Aid! Will a Beaufort give me back my birthright, restore my dead mother's fair name? Minion! — sleek, dainty, luxurious minion! — out of my path! You have my fortune, my station, my rights; I have but poverty and hate and disdain. I swear, again and again, that you shall not purchase these from me."

"But, Philip, Philip," cried Beaufort, catching his arm; "hear one, hear one who stood by your —"

The sentence that would have saved the outcast from the demons that were darkening and swooping round his soul died upon the young Protector's lips. Blinded, maddened, excited, and exasperated almost out of humanity itself, Philip fiercely, brutally, swung aside the enfeebled form that sought to cling to him, and Beaufort fell at his feet. Morton stopped, glared at him with clenched hands and a smiling lip, sprung over his prostrate form, and bounded to his home.

He slackened his pace as he neared the house, and looked behind; but Beaufort had not followed him. He entered the house, and found Sidney in the room, with a countenance so much more gay than that he had lately worn that, absorbed as he was in thought and passion, it yet did not fail to strike him.

"What has pleased you, Sidney?"

The child smiled.

"Ah! it is a secret; I was not to tell you. But I'm sure you are not the naughty boy he says you are."

"He! who?"

"Don't look so angry, Philip; you frighten me!"

"And you torture me. Who could malign one brother to the other?"

"Oh, it was all meant very kindly. There's been such a nice, dear, good gentleman here, and he cried when he saw me, and said he knew dear Mamma. Well, and he has promised to take me home with him and give me a pretty pony, as pretty, as pretty, oh, as pretty as it can be got! And he is to call again and tell me more; I think he is a fairy, Philip."

"Did he say that he was to take *me*, too, Sidney?" said Morton, seating himself, and looking very pale. At that question Sidney hung his head.

"No, brother, he says you won't go, and that you are a bad boy, and that you associate with wicked people, and that you want to keep me shut up here and not let any one be good to me; but I told him I did not believe that, — yes, indeed, I told him so."

And Sidney endeavoured caressingly to withdraw the hands that his brother placed before his face.

Morton started up, and walked hastily to and fro the room. "This," thought he, "is another emissary of the Beauforts', — perhaps the lawyer; they will take *him* from me, — the last thing left to love and hope for. I will foil them. — Sidney," he said aloud, "we must go hence to-day, this very hour, nay, instantly."

"What! away from this nice, good gentleman?"

"Curse him! yes, away from him. Do not cry; it is of no use; you *must* go."

This was said more harshly than Philip had ever yet spoken to Sidney; and when he had said it, he left the room to settle with the landlady, and to pack up their scanty effects. In another hour, the brothers had turned their backs on the town.

CHAPTER X.

I 'LL carry thee
In sorrow's arms to welcome Misery.

HEYWOOD: *Duchess of Suffolk.*

Who's here besides foul weather?

SHAKESPEARE: *Lear.*

THE sun was as bright and the sky as calm during the journey of the orphans as in the last. They avoided, as before, the main roads, and their way lay through landscapes that might have charmed a Gainsborough's eye. Autumn scattered its last hues of gold over the various foliage, and the poppy glowed from the hedges, and the wild convolvuli, here and there, still gleamed on the wayside with a parting smile.

At times, over the sloping stubbles, broke the sound of the sportsman's gun; and ever and anon, by stream and sedge, they startled the shy wild fowl, just come from the far lands, nor yet settled in the new haunts too soon to be invaded.

But there was no longer in the travellers the same hearts that had made light of hardship and fatigue. Sidney was no longer flying from a harsh master; and his step was not elastic with the energy of fear that looked behind, and of hope that smiled before. He was going a toilsome, weary journey, he knew not why nor whither; just, too, when he had made a friend, whose soothing words haunted his childish fancy. He was displeased with Philip, and in sullen and silent thoughtfulness slowly plodded behind him; and Morton himself was gloomy, and knew not where in the world to seek a future.

They arrived at dusk at a small inn, not so far distant from the town they had left as Morton could have wished; but the days were shorter than in their first flight.

They were shown into a small sanded parlour, which Sidney eyed with great disgust; nor did he seem more pleased with

the hacked and jagged leg of cold mutton, which was all that the hostess set before them for supper. Philip in vain endeavoured to cheer him up, and ate to set him the example. He felt relieved when, under the auspices of a good-looking, good-natured chambermaid, Sidney retired to rest, and he was left in the parlour to his own meditations. Hitherto it had been a happy thing for Morton that he had had some one dependent on him; that feeling had given him perseverance, patience, fortitude, and hope. But now, dispirited and sad, he felt rather the horror of being responsible for a human life, without seeing the means to discharge the trust. It was clear, even to his experience, that he was not likely to find another employer as facile as Mr. Stubmore; and wherever he went, he felt as if his Destiny stalked at his back. He took out his little fortune and spread it on the table, counting it over and over; it had remained pretty stationary since his service with Mr. Stubmore, for Sidney had swallowed up the wages of his hire. While thus employed, the door opened, and the chambermaid, showing in a gentleman, said, "We have no other room, sir."

"Very well, then, — I'm not particular; a tumbler of brandy and water, stiffish — cold without — the newspaper, and a cigar. You 'll excuse smoking, sir?"

Philip looked up from his hoard, and Captain de Burgh Smith stood before him.

"Ah!" said the latter, "well met!" And closing the door, he took off his great-coat, seated himself near Philip, and bent both his eyes with considerable wistfulness on the neat rows into which Philip's bank-notes, sovereigns, and shillings were arrayed.

"Pretty little sum for pocket money; caush in hand goes a great way, properly invested. You must have been very lucky. Well, so I suppose you are surprised to see me here without my pheaton?"

"I wish I had never seen you at all," replied Philip, uncourtously, and restoring his money to his pocket; "your fraud upon Mr. Stubmore and your assurance that you knew me have sent me adrift upon the world."

"What's one man's meat is another man's poison," said the Captain, philosophically; "no use fretting, care killed a cat. I am as badly off as you; for, hang me, if there was not a Bow Street runner in the town. I caught his eye fixed on me like a gimblet; so I bolted, went to N——, left my pheaton and groom there for the present, and have doubled back, to bauffle pursuit, and cut across the country. You recollect that noice girl we saw in the coach; 'gad, I served her spouse that is to be a praetty trick! Borrowed his money under pretence of investing it in the New Grand Anti-Dry-Rot Company; cool hundred; it's only just gone, sir."

Here the chambermaid entered with the brandy and water, the newspaper and cigar. The Captain lighted the last, took a deep sup from the beverage, and said gayly, —

"Well, now, let us join fortunes; we are both, as you say, 'adrift.' Best way to staund the breeze is to unite the caubles."

Philip shook his head, and, displeased with his companion, sought his pillow. He took care to put his money under his head, and to lock his door.

The brothers started at daybreak; Sidney was even more discontented than on the previous day. The weather was hot and oppressive; they rested for some hours at noon, and in the cool of the evening renewed their way. Philip had made up his mind to steer for a town in the thick of a hunting district, where he hoped his equestrian capacities might again befriend him; and their path now lay through a chain of vast dreary commons, which gave them at least the advantage to skirt the road-side unobserved. But, somehow or other, either Philip had been misinformed as to an inn where he had proposed to pass the night, or he had missed it; for the clouds darkened and the sun went down, and no vestige of human habitation was discernible. Sidney, footsore and querulous, began to weep, and declare that he could stir no farther; and while Philip, whose iron frame defied fatigue, compassionately paused to rest his brother, a low roll of thunder broke upon the gloomy air. "There will be a storm," said he, anxiously. "Come on; pray, Sidney, come on."

"It is so cruel in you, brother Philip," replied Sidney, sobbing. "I wish I had never—never gone with you."

A flash of lightning, that illuminated the whole heavens, lingered round Sidney's pale face as he spoke; and Philip threw himself instinctively on the child, as if to protect him even from the wrath of the unshelterable flame. Sidney, hushed and terrified, clung to his brother's breast; after a pause, he silently consented to resume their journey. But now the storm came nearer and nearer to the wanderers. The darkness grew rapidly more intense, save when the lightning lit up heaven and earth alike with intolerable lustre; and when at length the rain began to fall in merciless and drenching torrents, even Philip's brave heart failed him. How could he ask Sidney to proceed, when they could scarcely see an inch before them? All that could now be done was to gain the high road, and hope for some passing conveyance. With fits and starts, and by the glare of the lightning, they obtained their object; and stood at last on the great broad thoroughfare, along which, since the day when the Roman carved it from the waste, Misery hath plodded and Luxury rolled their common way.

Philip had stripped handkerchief, coat, vest, all to shelter Sidney; and he felt a kind of strange pleasure through the dark even to hear Sidney's voice wail and moan. But that voice grew more languid and faint; it ceased; Sidney's weight hung heavy, heavier on the fostering arm.

"For Heaven's sake, speak! speak, Sidney! only one word! I will carry you in my arms!"

"I think I am dying," replied Sidney, in a low murmur; "I am so tired and worn out I can go no farther; I must lie here." And he sank at once upon the reeking grass beside the road. At this time the rain gradually relaxed; the clouds broke away; a gray light succeeded to the darkness; the lightning was more distant, and the thunder rolled onward in its awful path. Kneeling on the ground, Philip supported his brother in his arms, and cast his pleading eyes upward to the softening terrors of the sky. A star, a solitary star, broke out for one moment, as if to smile comfort upon him, and then

vanished. But lo! in the distance there suddenly gleamed a red, steady light, like that in some solitary window. It was no will-o'-the-wisp, — it was too stationary; human shelter was then nearer than he had thought for. He pointed to the light, and whispered, "Rouse yourself, one struggle more; it cannot be far off."

"It is impossible; I cannot stir," answered Sidney; and a sudden flash of lightning showed his countenance, ghastly, as if with the damps of Death. What could the brother do, — stay there, and see the boy perish before his eyes; leave him on the road and fly to the friendly light? The last plan was the sole one left, yet he shrank from it in greater terror than the first. Was that a step that he heard across the road? He held his breath to listen; a form became dimly visible; it approached.

Philip shouted aloud.

"What now?" answered the voice, and it seemed familiar to Morton's ear. He sprang forward; and putting his face close to the wayfarer, thought to recognize the features of Captain de Burgh Smith. The Captain, whose eyes were yet more accustomed to the dark, made the first overture.

"Why, my lad, is it you then? 'Gad, you frightened me!"

Odious as this man had hitherto been to Philip, he was as welcome to him as daylight now; he grasped his hand. "My brother, a child, is here, dying, I fear, with cold and fatigue; he cannot stir. Will you stay with him, support him, but for a few moments, while I make to yon light? See, I have money, plenty of money!"

"My good lad, it is very ugly work staying here at this hour; still — where's the choild?"

"Here, here! make haste, raise him! that's right! God bless you! I shall be back ere you think me gone."

He sprang from the road, and plunged through the heath, the furze, the rank glistening pools, straight towards the light, as the swimmer towards the shore.

The Captain, though a rogue, was human; and when life, an innocent life, is at stake, even a rogue's heart rises up from

its weedy bed. He muttered a few oaths, it is true, but he held the child in his arms; and, taking out a little tin case, poured some brandy down Sidney's throat, and then, by way of company, down his own. The cordial revived the boy; he opened his eyes, and said, "I think I can go on now, Philip."

We must return to Arthur Beaufort. He was naturally, though gentle, a person of high spirit, and not without pride. He rose from the ground with bitter, resentful feelings and a blushing cheek, and went his way to the hotel. Here he found Mr. Spencer just returned from his visit to Sidney. Enchanted with the soft and endearing manners of his lost Catherine's son, and deeply affected with the resemblance the child bore to the mother as *he* had seen her last at the gay and rosy age of fair sixteen, his description of the younger brother drew Beaufort's indignant thoughts from the elder. He cordially concurred with Mr. Spencer in the wish to save one so gentle from the domination of one so fierce; and this, after all, was the child Catherine had most strongly commended to him. She had said little of the elder; perhaps she had been aware of his ungracious and untractable nature, and, as it seemed to Arthur Beaufort, his predilections for a coarse and low career.

"Yes," said he, "this boy, then, shall console me for the perverse brutality of the other. He shall indeed drink of my cup, and eat of my bread, and be to me as a brother."

"What!" said Mr. Spencer, changing countenance, "you do not intend to take Sidney to live with *you*? I meant him for *my* son, my adopted son."

"No; generous as you are," said Arthur, pressing his hand, "this charge devolves on me; it is my right. I am the orphan's relation, his mother consigned him to me; but he shall be taught to love you not the less."

Mr. Spencer was silent. He could not bear the thought of losing Sidney as an inmate of his cheerless home, a tender relic of his early love. From that moment he began to contemplate the possibility of securing Sidney to himself unknown to Beaufort.

The plans both of Arthur and Spencer were interrupted by the sudden retreat of the brothers. They determined to depart different ways in search of them. Spencer, as the more helpless of the two, obtained the aid of Mr. Sharp; Beaufort departed with the lawyer.

Two travellers, in a hired barouche, were slowly dragged by a pair of jaded posters along the commons I have just described.

"I think," said one, "that the storm is very much abated; heigho! what an unpleasant night!"

"Unkimmon ugly, sir," answered the other; "and an awful long stage, eighteen miles. These here remote places are quite behind the age, sir, quite. However, I think we shall kitch them now."

"I am very much afraid of that eldest boy, Sharp. He seems a dreadful vagabond."

"You see, sir, quite hand in glove with Dashing Jerry; met in the same inn last night, — preconcerted, you may be quite sure. It would be the best day's job I have done this many a day to save that 'ere little fellow from being corrupted. You sees he is just of a size to be useful to these bad karakters. If they took to burglary he would be a treasure to them, — slip him through a pane of glass like a ferret, sir."

"Don't talk of it, Sharp," said Mr. Spencer, with a groan; "and recollect, if we get hold of him, that you are not to say a word to Mr. Beaufort."

"I understand, sir; and I always goes with the gemman who behaves most like a gemman."

Here a loud halloo was heard close by the horses' heads.

"Good heavens, if that is a footpad!" said Mr. Spencer, shaking violently.

"Lord, sir, I have my barkers with me. Who's there?"

The barouche stopped; a man came to the window.

"Excuse me, sir," said the stranger; "but there is a poor boy here so tired and ill that I fear he will never reach the next town, unless you will koindly give him a lift."

"A poor boy!" said Mr. Spencer, poking his head over the head of Mr. Sharp. "Where?"

"If you would just drop him at the King's Arms it would be a chaurity," said the man.

Sharp pinched Mr. Spencer in the shoulder. "That's Dashing Jerry; I'll get out." So saying, he opened the door, jumped into the road, and presently reappeared with the lost and welcome Sidney in his arms. "Ben't this the boy?" he whispered to Mr. Spencer; and taking the lamp from the carriage, he raised it to the child's face.

"It is! it is! God be thanked!" exclaimed the worthy man.

"Will you leave him at the King's Arms? We shall be there in an hour or two," cried the Captain.

"We! Who's *we*?" said Sharp, gruffly.

"Why, myself and the choild's brother."

"Oh!" said Sharp, raising the lantern to his own face; "you knows me, I think, Master Jerry? Let me kitch you agin, that's all. And give my compliments to your 'sociate, and say, if he prosecutes this here hurchin any more, we'll settle his bizness for him; and so take a hint and make yourself scarce, old boy!"

With that Mr. Sharp jumped into the barouche, and bade the postboy drive on as fast as he could.

Ten minutes after this abduction, Philip, followed by two labourers, with a barrow, a lantern, and two blankets, returned from the hospitable farm to which the light had conducted him. The spot where he had left Sidney, and which he knew by a neighbouring milestone, was vacant; he shouted an alarm, and the Captain answered from the distance of some three-score yards. Philip came to him. "Where is my brother?"

"Gone away in a barouche and pair. Devil take me if I understand it." And the Captain proceeded to give a confused account of what had passed.

"My brother! my brother! they have torn thee from me, then!" cried Philip, and he fell to the earth insensible.

CHAPTER XI.

VOUS me rendrez mon frère!¹

CASIMER DELAVIGNE : *Les Enfants d'Edouard.*

ONE evening, a week after this event, a wild, tattered, haggard youth knocked at the door of Mr. Robert Beaufort.

The porter slowly presented himself.

"Is your master at home? I must see him instantly."

"That's more than you can, my man; my master does not see the like of you at this time of night," replied the porter, eying the ragged apparition before him with great disdain.

"See me he must and shall," replied the young man; and as the porter blocked up the entrance, he grasped his collar with a hand of iron, swung him, huge as he was, aside, and strode into the spacious hall.

"Stop! stop!" cried the porter, recovering himself. "James! John! here's a go!"

Mr. Robert Beaufort had been back in town several days. Mrs. Beaufort, who was waiting his return from his club, was in the dining-room. Hearing a noise in the hall, she opened the door, and saw the strange grim figure I have described, advancing towards her. "Who are you?" said she; "and what do you want?"

"I am Philip Morton. Who are you?"

"My husband," said Mrs. Beaufort, shrinking into the parlour, while Morton followed her and closed the door, "my husband, Mr. Beaufort, is not at home."

"You are Mrs. Beaufort, then! Well, you can understand me. I want my brother. He has been basely reft from me. Tell me where he is, and I will forgive all. Restore him to me, and I will bless you and yours." And Philip fell on his knees and grasped the train of her gown.

¹ "You shall restore me my brother!"

"I know nothing of your brother, Mr. Morton," cried Mrs. Beaufort, surprised and alarmed. "Arthur, whom we expect every day, writes us word that all search for him has been in vain."

"Ha! you admit the search?" cried Morton, rising and clenching his hands. "And who else but you or yours would have parted brother and brother? Answer me where he is. No subterfuge, madam; I am desperate!"

Mrs. Beaufort, though a woman of that worldly coldness and indifference which on ordinary occasions supply the place of courage, was extremely terrified by the tone and mien of her rude guest. She laid her hand on the bell; but Morton seized her arm, and holding it sternly said, while his dark eyes shot fire through the glimmering room, "I will not stir hence till you have told me. Will you reject my gratitude, my blessing? Beware! Again, where have you hid my brother?"

At that instant the door opened, and Mr. Robert Beaufort entered. The lady, with a shriek of joy, wrenched herself from Philip's grasp, and flew to her husband.

"Save me from this ruffian!" she said, with an hysterical sob.

Mr. Beaufort, who had heard from Blackwell strange accounts of Philip's obdurate perverseness, vile associates, and unredeemable character, was roused from his usual timidity by the appeal of his wife.

"Insolent reprobate!" he said, advancing to Philip; "after all the absurd goodness of my son and myself; after rejecting all our offers, and persisting in your miserable and vicious conduct, how dare you presume to force yourself into this house? Begone, or I will send for the constables to remove you!"

"Man, man," cried Philip, restraining the fury that shook him from head to foot, "I care not for your threats, I scarcely hear your abuse. Your son or yourself has stolen away my brother. Tell me only where he is; let me see him once more. Do not drive me hence, without one word of justice, of pity. I implore you, on my knees I implore you, yes, I, I

implore you, Robert Beaufort, to have mercy on your brother's son. Where is Sidney?"

Like all mean and cowardly men, Robert Beaufort was rather encouraged than softened by Philip's abrupt humility.

"I know nothing of your brother; and if this is not all some villanous trick—which it may be—I am heartily rejoiced that he, poor child! is rescued from the contamination of such a companion," answered Beaufort.

"I am at your feet still; again, for the last time, clinging to you a suppliant, I pray you to tell me the truth."

Mr. Beaufort, more and more exasperated by Morton's forbearance, raised his hand as if to strike; when, at that moment, one hitherto unobserved, one who, terrified by the scene she had witnessed but could not comprehend, had slunk into a dark corner of the room, now came from her retreat. And a child's soft voice was heard, saying, —

"Do not strike him, Papa! let him have his brother!"

Mr. Beaufort's arm fell to his side. Kneeling before him, and by the outcast's side, was his own young daughter; she had crept into the room unobserved when her father entered. Through the dim shadows, relieved only by the red and fitful gleam of the fire, he saw her fair meek face looking up wistfully at his own, with tears of excitement, and perhaps of pity—for children have a quick insight into the reality of grief in those not far removed from their own years—glistering in her soft eyes. Philip looked round bewildered, and he saw that face which seemed to him, at such a time, like the face of an angel.

"Hear her!" he murmured; "oh, hear her! For her sake, do not sever one orphan from the other!"

"Take away that child, Mrs. Beaufort," cried Robert, angrily. "Will you let her disgrace herself thus? And you, sir, begone from this roof; and when you can approach me with due respect, I will give you, as I said I would, the means to get an honest living."

Philip rose; Mrs. Beaufort had already led away her daughter, and she took that opportunity of sending in the servants. Their forms filled up the doorway.

"Will you go?" continued Mr. Beaufort, more and more emboldened, as he saw the menials at hand, "or shall *they* expel you?"

"It is enough, sir," said Philip, with a sudden calm and dignity that surprised and almost awed his uncle. "My father, if the dead yet watch over the living, has seen and heard you. There will come a day for justice. Out of my path, hirelings!"

He waved his arm, and the menials shrank back at his tread, stalked across the inhospitable hall, and vanished.

When he had gained the street, he turned and looked up at the house. His dark and hollow eyes, gleaming through the long and raven hair that fell profusely over his face, had in them an expression of menace almost preternatural, from its settled calmness. The wild and untutored majesty which through rags and squalor never deserted his form, as it never does the forms of men in whom the will is strong and the sense of injustice deep; the outstretched arm; the haggard, but noble features; the bloomless and scathed youth, — all gave to his features and his stature an aspect awful in its sinister and voiceless wrath. There he stood a moment, like one to whom woe and wrong have given a Prophet's power, guiding the eye of the unforgetful Fate to the roof of the Oppressor. Then slowly, and with a half smile, he turned away, and strode through the streets till he arrived at one of the narrow lanes that intersect the more equivocal quarters of the huge city. He stopped at the private entrance of a small pawnbroker's shop. The door was opened by a slipshod boy; he ascended the dingy stairs till he came to the second floor; and there, in a small back room, he found Captain de Burgh Smith, seated before a table with a couple of candles on it, smoking a cigar, and playing at cards by himself.

"Well, what news of your brother, Bully Phil?"

"None; they will reveal nothing."

"Do you give him up?"

"Never! My hope now is in you."

"Well, I thought you would be driven to come to me, and I will do something for you that I should not loike to do for

myself. I told you that I knew the Bow Street runner who was in the barouche. I will find him out, — Heaven knows that is easily done; and if you can pay well, you will get your news."

"You shall have all I possess, if you restore my brother. See what it is, £100, — it was his fortune. It is useless to me without him. There, take fifty now, and if —"

Philip stopped, for his voice trembled too much to allow him further speech. Captain Smith thrust the notes into his pocket, and said, —

"We'll consider it settled."

Captain Smith fulfilled his promise. He saw the Bow Street officer. Mr. Sharp had been bribed too high by the opposite party to tell tales, and he willingly encouraged the suspicion that Sidney was under the care of the Beauforts. He promised, however, for the sake of ten guineas, to procure Philip a letter from Sidney himself. This was all he would undertake.

Philip was satisfied. At the end of another week, Mr. Sharp transmitted to the Captain a letter, which he, in his turn, gave to Philip. It ran thus, in Sidney's own sprawling hand: —

DEAR BROTHER PHILIP, — I am told you wish to know how I am, and therefore take up my pen, and assure you that I write all out of my own head. I am very Comfortable and happy, — much more so than I have been since poor deir mama died ; so I beg you won't vex yourself about me : and pray don't try and Find me out, For I would not go with you again for the world. I am so much better Off here. I wish you would be a good boy, and leave off your Bad ways: for I am sure, as every one says, I don't know what would have become of me if I had staid with you. Mr. — [the Mr. half scratched out] the gentleman I am with, says if you turn out Properly he will be a friend to *you*, Too; but he advises you to go, like a Good boy, to Arthur Beaufort, and ask his pardon for the past, and then Arthur will be very kind to you. I send you a great Big sum of £20, and the gentleman says he would send more, only it might make you naughty, and set up. I go to church now every Sunday, and read good books, and always pray that God may open your eyes. I have such a Nice Pony, with such a long tale. So no more at present from your affectionate brother,

SIDNEY MORTON.

OCT. 8, 18 —,

Pray, pray don't come after me Any more. You know I neerly died of it, but for this deir good gentleman I am with.

So this, then, was the crowning reward of all his sufferings and all his love! There was the letter, evidently undictated, with its errors of orthography, and in the child's rough scrawl; the serpent's tooth pierced to the heart, and left there its most lasting venom.

"I have done with him forever," said Philip, brushing away the bitter tears. "I will molest him no further; I care no more to pierce this mystery. Better for him as it is, — he is happy! Well, well, and I — *I* will never care for a human being again."

He bowed his head over his hands; and when he rose, his heart felt to him like stone. It seemed as if Conscience herself had fled from his soul on the wings of departed Love.

CHAPTER XII.

BUT you have found the mountain's top, — there sit
On the calm flourishing head of it;
And whilst with wearied steps we upward go,
See us and clouds below. — COWLEY.

It was true that Sidney was happy in his new home, and thither we must now trace him.

On reaching the town where the travellers in the barouche had been requested to leave Sidney, The King's Arms was precisely the inn eschewed by Mr. Spencer. While the horses were being changed, he summoned the surgeon of the town to examine the child, who had already much recovered; and by stripping his clothes, wrapping him in warm blankets, and administering cordials, he was permitted to reach another stage, so as to baffle pursuit that night; and in three days Mr. Spencer had placed his new charge with his maiden sis-

ters, a hundred and fifty miles from the spot where he had been found. He would not take him to his own home yet. He feared the claims of Arthur Beaufort. He artfully wrote to that gentleman, stating that he had abandoned the chase of Sidney in despair, and desiring to know if he had discovered him; and a bribe of £300 to Mr. Sharp with a candid exposition of his reasons for secreting Sidney — reasons in which the worthy officer professed to sympathize — secured the discretion of his ally. But he would not deny himself the pleasure of being in the same house with Sidney, and was therefore for some months the guest of his sisters. At length he heard that young Beaufort had been ordered abroad for his health, and he then deemed it safe to transfer his new idol to his *Lares* by the Lakes. During this interval the current of the younger Morton's life had indeed flowed through flowers. At his age the cares of females were almost a want as well as a luxury, and the sisters spoiled and petted him as much as any elderly nymphs in Cytherea ever petted Cupid. They were good, excellent, high-nosed, flat-bosomed spinsters, sentimentally fond of their brother, whom they called "the poet," and dotingly attached to children. The cleanness, the quiet, the good cheer of their neat abode, all tended to revive and invigorate the spirits of their young guest, and every one there seemed to vie which should love him the most. Still his especial favourite was Mr. Spencer, — for Spencer never went out without bringing back cakes and toys; and Spencer gave him his pony; and Spencer rode a little crop-eared nag by his side; and Spencer, in short, was associated with his every comfort and caprice. He told them his little history; and when he said how Philip had left him alone for long hours together, and how Philip had forced him to his last and nearly fatal journey, the old maids groaned and the old bachelor sighed, and they all cried in a breath that Philip was a very wicked boy. It was not only their obvious policy to detach him from his brother, but it was their sincere conviction that they did right to do so. Sidney began, it is true, by taking Philip's part; but his mind was ductile, and he still looked back with a shudder to the hardships he had gone

through. And so by little and little he learned to forget all the endearing and fostering love Philip had evinced to him, to connect his name with dark and mysterious fears, to repeat thanksgivings to Providence that he was saved from him, and to hope that they might never meet again. In fact, when Mr. Spencer learned from Sharp that it was through Captain Smith, the swindler, that application had been made by Philip for news of his brother, and having also learned before from the same person that Philip had been implicated in the sale of a horse, swindled, if not stolen, — he saw every additional reason to widen the stream that flowed between the wolf and the lamb. The older Sidney grew, the better he comprehended and appreciated the motives of his protector; for he was brought up in a formal school of propriety and ethics, and his mind naturally revolted from all images of violence or fraud. Mr. Spencer changed both the Christian and the surname of his *protégé*, in order to elude the search whether of Philip, the Mortons, or the Beauforts, and Sidney passed for his nephew by a younger brother who had died in India.

So there, by the calm banks of the placid lake, amidst the fairest landscapes of the Island Garden, the youngest born of Catherine passed his tranquil days. The monotony of the retreat did not fatigue a spirit which, as he grew up, found occupation in books, music, poetry, and the elegances of the cultivated, if quiet, life within his reach. To the rough past he looked back as to an evil dream, in which the image of Philip stood dark and threatening. His brother's name as he grew older he rarely mentioned; and if he did volunteer it to Mr. Spencer, the bloom on his cheek grew paler. The sweetness of his manners, his fair face and winning smile, still continued to secure him love, and to screen from the common eye whatever of selfishness yet lurked in his nature; and, indeed, that fault in so serene a career, and with friends so attached, was seldom called into action. So thus was he severed from both the protectors, Arthur and Philip, to whom poor Catherine had bequeathed him.

By a perverse and strange mystery, they to whom the charge

was most intrusted were the very persons who were forbidden to redeem it. On our death-beds when we think we have provided for those we leave behind, should we lose the last smile that gilds the solemn agony, if we could look one year into the Future?

Arthur Beaufort, after an ineffectual search for Sidney, heard on returning to his home no unexaggerated narrative of Philip's visit, and listened with deep resentment to his mother's distorted account of the language addressed to her. It is not to be surprised that, with all his romantic generosity, he felt sickened and revolted at violence that seemed to him without excuse. Though not a revengeful character, he had not that meekness which never resents. He looked upon Philip Morton as upon one rendered incorrigible by bad passions and evil company. Still, Catherine's last bequest, and Philip's note to him the Unknown Comforter, often recurred to him, and he would have willingly yet aided him had Philip been thrown in his way. But as it was, when he looked around and saw the examples of that charity that begins at home, in which the world abounds, he felt as if he had done his duty; and prosperity having, though it could not harden his heart, still sapped the habits of perseverance, so by little and little the image of the dying Catherine and the thought of her sons faded from his remembrance. And for this there was the more excuse after the receipt of an anonymous letter, which relieved all his apprehensions on behalf of Sidney. The letter was short, and stated simply that Sidney Morton had found a friend who would protect him throughout life, but who would not scruple to apply to Beaufort if ever he needed his assistance. So one son, and that the youngest and the best-loved, was safe. And the other, had he not chosen his own career? Alas, poor Catherine! when you fancied that Philip was the one sure to force his way into fortune and Sidney the one most helpless, how ill did you judge of the human heart! It was that very strength of Philip's nature which tempted the winds that scattered the blossoms, and shook the stem to its roots; while the lighter and frailer nature bent to the gale, and bore transplanting to a happier soil. If a parent read these pages,

let him pause and think well on the characters of his children; let him at once fear and hope the most for the one whose passions and whose temper lead to a struggle with the world. That same world is a tough wrestler, and has a bear's gripe.

Meanwhile, Arthur Beaufort's own complaints, which grew serious, and menaced consumption, recalled his thoughts more and more every day to himself. He was compelled to abandon his career at the University, and to seek for health in the softer breezes of the South. His parents accompanied him to Nice; and when, at the end of a few months, he was restored to health, the desire of travel seized the mind and attracted the fancy of the young heir. His father and mother, satisfied with his recovery, and not unwilling that he should acquire the polish of Continental intercourse, returned to England; and young Beaufort, with gay companions and munificent income, already courted, spoiled, and flattered, commenced his tour with the fair climes of Italy.

So, O dark mystery of the Moral World! so, unlike the order of the External Universe, glide together, side by side, the shadowy steeds of NIGHT AND MORNING. Examine life in its own world; confound not *that* world, the inner one, the practical one, with the more visible, yet airier and less substantial system, doing homage to the sun, to whose throne, afar in the infinite space, the human heart has no wings to flee. In life, the mind and the circumstance give the true seasons, and regulate the darkness and the light. Of two men standing on the same foot of earth, the one revels in the joyous noon, the other shudders in the solitude of night. For Hope and Fortune the daystar is ever shining; for Care and Penury, Night changes not with the ticking of the clock, nor with the shadow on the dial. Morning for the heir, night for the houseless, and God's eye over both.

BOOK III.

Berge lagen mir im Wege,
Ströme hemmten meinen Fuß:
Ueber Schlünde baut' ich Stege,
Brücken durch den wilden Fluß.

SCHILLER: *Der Pilgrim*.

CHAPTER I.

THE knight of arts and industry,
And his achievements fair.

THOMSON: *Castle of Indolence*.

IN a popular and respectable but not very fashionable *quartier* in Paris, and in the tolerably broad and effective *locale* of the Rue —, there might be seen, at the time I now treat of, a curious-looking building, that jutted out semicircularly from the neighbouring shops, with plaster pilasters and compo ornaments. The *virtuosi* of the *quartier* had discovered that the building was constructed in imitation of an ancient temple in Rome; this erection, then fresh and new, reached only to the *entresol*. The pilasters were painted light green and gilded in the cornices, while, surmounting the architrave, were three little statues. One held a torch, another a bow, and a third a bag; they were therefore rumoured, I know not with what justice, to be the artistical representatives of Hymen, Cupid, and Fortune.

On the door was neatly engraved, on a brass plate, the following inscription: —

MONSIEUR LOVE, ANGLAIS,
A L'ENTRESOL.

And if you had crossed the threshold and mounted the stairs, and gained that mysterious story inhabited by M. Love,

you would have seen, upon another door to the right, another epigraph, informing those interested in the inquiry that the *bureau* of M. Love was open daily from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon.

The office of M. Love — for office it was, and of a nature not unfrequently designated in the "*petites affiches*" of Paris — had been established about six months; and whether it was the popularity of the profession or the shape of the shop or the manners of M. Love himself, I cannot pretend to say, but certain it is that the Temple of Hymen — as M. Love classically termed it — had become exceedingly in vogue in the Faubourg St. —. It was rumoured that no less than nine marriages in the immediate neighbourhood had been manufactured at this fortunate office, and that they had all turned out happily, — except one, in which the bride being sixty and the bridegroom twenty-four there had been rumours of domestic dissension; but as the lady had been delivered, — I mean of her husband, who had drowned himself in the Seine about a month after the ceremony, — things had turned out in the long run better than might have been expected; and the widow was so little discouraged, that she had been seen to enter the office already, — a circumstance that was greatly to the credit of Mr. Love.

Perhaps the secret of Mr. Love's success, and of the marked superiority of his establishment in rank and popularity over similar ones, consisted in the spirit and liberality with which the business was conducted. He seemed resolved to destroy all formality between parties who might desire to draw closer to each other, and he hit upon the lucky device of a *table d'hôte*, very well managed and held twice a week, and often followed by a *soirée dansante*; so that, if they pleased, the aspirants to matrimonial happiness might become acquainted without *gêne*. As he himself was a jolly, convivial fellow of much *savoir vivre*, it is astonishing how well he made these entertainments answer. Persons who had not seemed to take to each other in the first distant interview grew extremely enamoured when the corks of the champagne — an extra of course in the *abonnement* — bounced against the wall. Added

to this, Mr. Love took great pains to know the tradesmen in his neighbourhood; and what with his jokes, his appearance of easy circumstances, and the fluency with which he spoke the language, he became a universal favourite. Many persons who were uncommonly starched in general, and who professed to ridicule the *bureau*, saw nothing improper in dining at the *table d'hôte*. To those who wished for secrecy he was said to be wonderfully discreet; but there were others who did not affect to conceal their discontent at the single state. For the rest, the entertainments were so contrived as never to shock the delicacy, while they always forwarded the suit.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening, and Mr. Love was still seated at dinner, or rather at dessert, with a party of guests. His apartments, though small, were somewhat gaudily painted and furnished, and his dining-room was decorated à la *Turque*. The party consisted—first, of a rich *épiciier*, a widower, M. Goupille by name, an eminent man in the Faubourg; he was in his grand climacteric, but still *belhomme*; wore a very well-made *peruque* of light auburn, with tight pantaloons, which contained a pair of very respectable calves; and his white neckcloth and his large frill were washed and got up with especial care. Next to M. Goupille sat a very demure and very spare young lady of about two-and-thirty, who was said to have saved a fortune—Heaven knows how!—in the family of a rich English *milord*, where she had officiated as governess; she called herself Mademoiselle Adèle de Courval, and was very particular about the *de*, and very melancholy about her ancestors. M. Goupille generally put his finger through his *peruque*, and fell away a little on his left pantaloons when he spoke to Mademoiselle de Courval, and Mademoiselle de Courval generally pecked at her bouquet when she answered M. Goupille. On the other side of this young lady sat a fine-looking fair man, — M. Sovolofski, a Pole, buttoned up to the chin, and rather threadbare, though uncommonly neat. He was flanked by a little fat lady, who had been very pretty, and who kept a boarding-house, or *pension*, for the English, she herself being English, though long established in Paris.

Rumour said she had been gay in her youth, and dropped in Paris by a Russian nobleman, with a very pretty settlement, — she and the settlement having equally expanded by time and season: she was called Madame Beavor. On the other side of the table was a red-headed Englishman, who spoke very little French; who had been told that French ladies were passionately fond of light hair; and who, having £2,000 of his own, intended to quadruple that sum by a prudent marriage. Nobody knew what his family was, but his name was Higgins. His neighbour was an exceedingly tall, large-boned Frenchman, with a long nose and a red ribbon, who was much seen at Frascati's, and had served under Napoleon. Then came another lady, extremely pretty, very *piquante*, and very gay, but past the *première jeunesse*, who ogled Mr. Love more than she did any of his guests: she was called Rosalie Caumartin, and was at the head of a large *bon-bon* establishment; married, but her husband had gone four years ago to the Isle of France, and she was a little doubtful whether she might not be justly entitled to the privileges of a widow. Next to Mr. Love, in the place of honour, sat no less a person than the Vicomte de Vaudemont, a French gentleman, really well-born, but whose various excesses, added to his poverty, had not served to sustain that respect for his birth which he considered due to it. He had already been twice married; once to an Englishwoman, who had been decoyed by the title. By this lady, who died in childbed, he had one son, — a fact which he sedulously concealed from the world of Paris by keeping the unhappy boy, who was now some eighteen or nineteen years old, a perpetual exile in England. M. de Vaudemont did not wish to pass for more than thirty, and he considered that to produce a son of eighteen would be to make the lad a monster of ingratitude by giving the lie every hour to his own father! In spite of this precaution the Vicomte found great difficulty in getting a third wife, — especially as he had no actual land and visible income; was, not seamed, but ploughed up, with the smallpox; small of stature, and was considered more than *un peu bête*. He was, however, a prodigious dandy, and wore a lace frill and embroidered waist-

coat. Mr. Love's *vis-à-vis* was Mr. Birnie, an Englishman, a sort of assistant in the establishment, with a hard, dry, parchment face, and — a remarkable talent for silence. The host himself was a splendid animal; his vast chest seemed to occupy more space at the table than any four of his guests, yet he was not corpulent or unwieldy; he was dressed in black, wore a velvet stock very high, and four gold studs glittered in his shirt front; he was bald to the crown, which made his forehead appear singularly lofty, and what hair he had left was a little grayish and curled; his face was shaved smoothly, except a close-clipped mustache; and his eyes, though small, were bright and piercing. Such was the party.

"These are the best *bon-bons* I ever ate," said Mr. Love, glancing at Madame Caumartin. "My fair friends, have compassion on the table of a poor bachelor."

"But you ought not to be a bachelor, Monsieur Love," replied the fair Rosalie, with an arch look; "you who make others marry, should set the example."

"All in good time," answered Mr. Love, nodding; "one serves one's customers to so much happiness that one has none left for one's self."

Here a loud explosion was heard. M. Goupille had pulled one of the *bon-bon* crackers with Mademoiselle Adèle.

"I've got the motto! no, Monsieur has it; I'm always unlucky," said the gentle Adèle.

The *épiciér* solemnly unrolled the little slip of paper; the print was very small, and he longed to take out his spectacles, but he thought that would make him look old. However, he spelled through the motto with some difficulty: —

"Comme elle fait soumettre un cœur,
En refusant son doux hommage,
On peut traiter la coquette en vainqueur;
De la beauté modeste on chérit l'esclavage."¹

"I present it to Mademoiselle," said he, laying the motto solemnly in Adèle's plate, upon a little mountain of chestnut husks.

¹ "The coquette who subjugates a heart, yet refuses its tender homage, one may treat as a conqueror: of modest beauty we cherish the slavery."

"It is very pretty," said she, looking down.

"It is very à propos," whispered the *épiciér*, caressing the *peruque* a little too roughly in his emotion. Mr. Love gave him a kick under the table, and put his finger to his own bald head, and then to his nose, significantly. The intelligent *épiciér* smoothed back the irritated *peruque*.

"Are you fond of *bon-bons*, Mademoiselle Adèle? I have a very fine stock at home," said M. Goupille.

Mademoiselle Adèle de Courval sighed. "*Hélas!* they remind me of happier days, when I was a *petite*, and my dear grandmamma took me in her lap and told me how she escaped the guillotine; she was an *émigrée*, and you know her father was a marquis."

The *épiciér* bowed and looked puzzled. He did not quite see the connection between the *bon-bons* and the guillotine.

"You are *triste*, Monsieur," observed Madame Beavor, in rather a piqued tone, to the Pole, who had not said a word since the *rôti*.

"Madame, an exile is always *triste*; I think of my *pauvre pays*."

"Bah!" cried Mr. Love. "Think that there is no exile by the side of a *belle dame*."

The Pole smiled mournfully.

"Pull it," said Madame Beavor, holding a cracker to the patriot, and turning away her face.

"Yes, Madame; I wish it were a cannon in defence of *La Pologne*."

With this magniloquent aspiration, the gallant Sovolofski pulled lustily, and then rubbed his fingers, with a little grimace, observing that crackers were sometimes dangerous, and that the present combustible was *d'une force immense*.

"Hélas! J'ai cru jusqu'à ce jour
Pouvoir triompher de l'amour,"¹

said Madame Beavor, reading the motto. "What do you say to that?"

"Madame, there is no triumph for *La Pologne!*"

¹ "Alas! I believed until to-day that I could triumph over love."

Madame Beavor uttered a little peevish exclamation, and glanced in despair at her red-headed countryman. "Are you, too, a great politician, sir?" said she in English.

"No, mem! I'm all for the ladies."

"What does he say?" asked Madame Caumartin.

"M. Higgins est tout pour les dames."

"To be sure he is," cried Mr. Love; "all the English are, especially with that coloured hair; a lady who likes a passionate adorer should always marry a man with gold-coloured hair, — always. What do *you* say, Mademoiselle Adèle?"

"Oh, I like fair hair," said Mademoiselle, looking bashfully askew at M. Goupille's *peruque*. "Grandmamma said her papa, the marquis, used yellow powder: it must have been very pretty."

"Rather *à la sucre d'orge*," remarked the *épicier*, smiling on the right side of his mouth, where his best teeth were.

Mademoiselle de Courval looked displeased. "I fear you are a Republican, Monsieur Goupille."

"I, Mademoiselle. No; I'm for the Restoration;" and again the *épicier* perplexed himself to discover the association of idea between republicanism and *sucre d'orge*.

"Another glass of wine. Come, another," said Mr. Love, stretching across the Vicomte to help Madame Caumartin.

"Sir," said the tall Frenchman with the ribbon, eying the *épicier* with great disdain, "you say you are for the Restoration, — I am for the Empire, *moi!*"

"No politics!" cried Mr. Love. "Let us adjourn to the *salon*."

The Vicomte, who had seemed supremely *ennuyé* during this dialogue, plucked Mr. Love by the sleeve as he rose, and whispered petulantly, "I do not see any one here to suit me, Monsieur Love, — none of my rank."

"*Mon Dieu!*" answered Mr. Love: "*point d'argent point de Suisse*. I could introduce you to a duchess, but then the fee is high. There's Mademoiselle de Courval, — she dates from the Carolingians."

"She is very like a boiled sole," answered the Vicomte, with a wry face. "Still — what dower *has* she?"

"Forty thousand francs, and sickly," replied Mr. Love; "but she likes a tall man, and M. Goupille is —"

"Tall men are never well made," interrupted the Vicomte, angrily; and he drew himself aside as Mr. Love, gallantly advancing, gave his arm to Madame Beavor, because the Pole had, in rising, folded both his own arms across his breast.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Mr. Love to Madame Beavor, as they adjourned to the *salon*, "I don't think you manage that brave man well."

"Ma foi, comme il est ennuyeux avec sa Pologne," replied Madame Beavor, shrugging her shoulders.

"True; but he is a very fine-shaped man; and it is a comfort to think that one will have no rival but his country. Trust me, and encourage him a little more; I think he would suit you to a T."

Here the attendant engaged for the evening announced Monsieur and Madame Giraud; whereupon there entered a little, little couple, very fair, very plump, and very like each other. This was Mr. Love's show couple, his decoy ducks, his last best example of match-making; they had been married two months out of the *bureau*, and were the admiration of the neighbourhood for their conjugal affection. As they were now united, they had ceased to frequent the *table d'hôte*; but Mr. Love often invited them after the dessert, *pour encourager les autres*.

"My dear friends," cried Mr. Love, shaking each by the hand, "I am ravished to see you. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Monsieur and Madame Giraud, the happiest couple in Christendom. If I had done nothing else in my life but bring them together I should not have lived in vain!"

The company eyed the objects of this eulogium with great attention.

"Monsieur, my prayer is to deserve my *bonheur*," said M. Giraud.

"*Cher ange!*" murmured Madame; and the happy pair seated themselves next to each other.

Mr. Love, who was all for those innocent pastimes which do away with conventional formality and reserve, now pro-

posed a game at "Hunt the Slipper," which was welcomed by the whole party, except the Pole and the Vicomte; though Mademoiselle Adèle looked prudish, and observed to the *épiciér* that M. Love was so droll, but she should not have liked her *pauvre grandmaman* to see her.

The Vicomte had stationed himself opposite to Mademoiselle de Courval, and kept his eyes fixed on her very tenderly.

"Mademoiselle, I see, does not approve of such *bourgeois* diversions," said he.

"No, Monsieur," said the gentle Adèle. "But I think we must sacrifice our own tastes to those of the company."

"It is a very amiable sentiment," said the *épiciér*.

"It is one attributed to Grandmamma's papa, the Marquis de Courval. It has become quite a hackneyed remark since," said Adèle.

"Come, ladies," said the joyous Rosalie; "I volunteer my slipper."

"Asseyez-vous donc," said Madame Beavor to the Pole. "Have you no games of this sort in Poland?"

"Madame, *La Pologne* is no more," said the Pole; "but with the swords of her brave —"

"No swords here, if you please," said Mr. Love, putting his vast hands on the Pole's shoulder, and sinking him forcibly down into the circle now formed.

The game proceeded with great vigour and much laughter from Rosalie, Mr. Love, and Madame Beavor, especially whenever the last thumped the Pole with the heel of the slipper. M. Giraud was always sure that Madame Giraud had the slipper about her, which persuasion on his part gave rise to many little endearments, which are always so innocent among married people. The Vicomte and the *épiciér* were equally certain the slipper was with Mademoiselle Adèle, who defended herself with much more energy than might have been supposed in one so gentle. The *épiciér*, however, grew jealous of the attentions of his noble rival, and told him that he *gêne'd* Mademoiselle; whereupon the Vicomte called him an *impertinent*, and the tall Frenchman with the ribbon sprang up and said, —

"Can I be of any assistance, gentlemen?"

Therewith Mr. Love, the great peacemaker, interposed, and reconciling the rivals, proposed to change the game to *Colin Maillard*, — *Anglicè*, "Blind Man's Buff." Rosalie clapped her hands, and offered herself to be blindfolded. The tables and chairs were cleared away; and Madame Beavor pushed the Pole into Rosalie's arms, who, having felt him about the face for some moments, guessed him to be the tall Frenchman. During this time Monsieur and Madame Giraud hid themselves behind the window-curtain.

"Amuse yourself, *mon ami*," said Madame Beavor, to the liberated Pole.

"Ah, Madame," sighed M. Sovolofski, "how can I be gay! All my property confiscated by the Emperor of Russia! Has *La Pologne* no Brutus?"

"I think you are in love," said the host, clapping him on the back.

"Are you *quite* sure," whispered the Pole to the match-maker, "that Madame Beavor has *vingt mille livres de rentes*?"

"Not a *sou* less."

The Pole mused, and glancing at Madame Beavor, said, — "And yet, Madame, your charming gayety consoles me amidst all my suffering;" upon which Madame Beavor called him "flatterer," and rapped his knuckles with her fan. The latter proceeding the brave Pole did not seem to like, for he immediately buried his hands in his trousers' pockets.

The game was now at its meridian. Rosalie was uncommonly active, and flew about here and there, much to the harassment of the Pole, who repeatedly wiped his forehead, and observed that it was warm work, and put him in mind of the last sad battle for *La Pologne*. M. Goupille, who had lately taken lessons in dancing, and was vain of his agility, mounted the chairs and tables as Rosalie approached, with great grace and gravity. It so happened that in these saltations he ascended a stool near the curtain behind which Monsieur and Madame Giraud were ensconced. Somewhat agitated by a slight flutter behind the folds, which made him fancy on

the sudden panic that Rosalie was creeping that way, the *épiciier* made an abrupt *pirouette*, and the hook on which the curtains were suspended caught his left coat-tail, —

“The fatal vesture left the unguarded side.”

Just as he turned to extricate the garment from that dilemma, Rosalie sprang upon him, and naturally lifting her hands to that height where she fancied the human face divine, took another extremity of M. Goupille’s graceful frame thus exposed by surprise.

“I don’t know who this is. *Quelle drôle de visage!*” muttered Rosalie.

“*Mais*, Madame,” faltered M. Goupille, looking greatly disconcerted.

The gentle Adèle, who did not seem to relish this adventure, came to the relief of her wooer, and pinched Rosalie very sharply in the arm.

“That’s not fair; but I will know who this is,” cried Rosalie, angrily; “you sha’n’t escape!”

A sudden and universal burst of laughter roused her suspicions; she drew back, and exclaiming, “*Mais quelle mau-vaise plaisanterie; c’est trop fort!*” applied her fair hand to the place in dispute, with so hearty a good-will, that M. Goupille uttered a dolorous cry, and sprang from the chair, leaving the coat-tail (the cause of all his woe) suspended upon the hook.

It was just at this moment, and in the midst of the excitement caused by M. Goupille’s misfortune, that the door opened, and the attendant reappeared, followed by a young man in a large cloak.

The new-comer paused at the threshold, and gazed around him in evident surprise.

“*Diable!*” said Mr. Love, approaching, and gazing hard at the stranger. “Is it possible? You are come at last? Welcome!”

“But,” said the stranger, apparently still bewildered, “there is some mistake; you are not —”

“Yes, I am Mr. Love, — Love all the world over. How is

our friend Gregg? Told you to address yourself to Mr. Love, eh? Mum! Ladies and gentlemen, an acquisition to our party. Fine fellow, eh? Five feet eleven without his shoes, —and young enough to hope to be thrice married before he dies. When did you arrive?"

"To-day."

And thus, Philip Morton and Mr. William Gawtreay met once more.

CHAPTER II.

HAPPY the man who, void of care and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse retains
A splendid shilling! — *The Splendid Shilling.*

And wherefore should they take or care for thought?
The unreasoning vulgar willingly obey,
And leaving toil and poverty behind,
Run forth by different ways, the blissful boon to find.

WEST: *Education.*

"POOR boy! your story interests me. The events are romantic, but the moral is practical, old, everlasting, — life, boy, life. Poverty by itself is no such great curse; that is, if it stops short of starving. And passion by itself is a noble thing, sir; but poverty and passion together, poverty and feeling, poverty and pride, the poverty one is not born to, but falls into; and the man who ousts you out of your easy-chair, kicking you with every turn he takes, as he settles himself more comfortably — why, there's no romance in that; hard every-day life, sir! Well, well. So after your brother's letter you resigned yourself to that fellow Smith."

"No; I gave him my money, not my soul. I turned from his door, with a few shillings that he himself thrust into my hand, and walked on — I cared not whither — out of the town, into the fields, till night came; and then, just as I sud-

denly entered on the high road, many miles away, the moon rose, and I saw by the hedge-side something that seemed like a corpse. It was an old beggar, in the last state of raggedness, disease, and famine. He had laid himself down to die. I shared with him what I had, and helped him to a little inn. As he crossed the threshold, he turned round and blessed me. Do you know, the moment I heard that blessing a stone seemed rolled away from my heart? I said to myself, 'What then! even *I* can be of use to some one; and I am better off than that old man, for I have youth and health.' As these thoughts stirred in me, my limbs, before heavy with fatigue, grew light; a strange kind of excitement seized me. I ran on gayly beneath the moonlight that smiled over the crisp, broad road. I felt as if no house, not even a palace, were large enough for me that night; and when, at last, wearied out, I crept into a wood, and laid myself down to sleep, I still murmured to myself, 'I have youth and health.' But in the morning, when I rose, I stretched out my arms, and missed my brother! In two or three days I found employment with a farmer; but we quarrelled after a few weeks, for once he wished to strike me; and somehow or other I could work, but not serve. Winter had begun when we parted. Oh, such a winter! Then, then I knew what it was to be houseless. How I lived for some months—if to live it can be called—it would pain you to hear, and humble me to tell. At last, I found myself again in London; and one evening, not many days since, I resolved at last—for nothing else seemed left, and I had not touched food for two days—to come to you."

"And why did that never occur to you before?"

"Because," said Philip, with a deep blush,—"because I trembled at the power over my actions and my future life that I was to give to one whom I was to bless as a benefactor, yet distrust as a guide."

"Well," said Love, or Gawtre, with a singular mixture of irony and compassion in his voice; "and it was hunger, then, that terrified you at last even more than I?"

"Perhaps hunger, or perhaps rather the reasoning that comes from hunger. I had not, I say, touched food for two

days; and I was standing on that bridge, from which on one side you see the palace of a head of the Church, on the other the towers of the Abbey, within which the men I have read of in history lie buried. It was a cold, frosty evening, and the river below looked bright with the lamps and stars. I leaned, weak and sickening, against the wall of the bridge; and in one of the arched recesses beside me a cripple held out his hat for pence. I envied him! he had a livelihood; he was inured to it, perhaps bred to it; he had no shame. By a sudden impulse, I, too, turned abruptly round, held out my hand to the first passenger, and started at the shrillness of my own voice, as it cried 'Charity.'"

Gawtrety threw another log on the fire, looked complacently round the comfortable room, and rubbed his hands. The young man continued, —

"'You should be ashamed of yourself; I've a great mind to give you to the police,' was the answer, in a pert and sharp tone. I looked up, and saw the livery my father's menials had worn. I had been begging my bread from Robert Beaufort's lackey! I said nothing; the man went on his business on tiptoe, that the mud might not splash above the soles of his shoes. Then thoughts so black that they seemed to blot out every star from the sky — thoughts I had often wrestled against, but to which I now gave myself up with a sort of mad joy — seized me; and I remembered you. I had still preserved the address you gave me; I went straight to the house. Your friend, on naming you, received me kindly, and without question placed food before me, pressed on me clothing and money, procured me a passport, gave me your address, and now I am beneath your roof. Gawtrety, I know nothing yet of the world but the dark side of it. I know not what to deem you; but as you alone have been kind to me, so it is to your kindness rather than your aid that I now cling, — your kind words and kind looks; yet—" he stopped short, and breathed hard.

"Yet you would know more of me. Faith, my boy, I cannot tell you more at this moment. I believe, to speak fairly, I don't live exactly within the pale of the law. But I'm not

a villain. I never plundered my friend and called it play! I never murdered my friend and called it honour! I never seduced my friend's wife and called it gallantry!" As Gawtrey said this, he drew the words out, one by one, through his grinded teeth, paused, and resumed more gayly, "I struggle with Fortune; *voilà tout*. I am not what you seem to suppose — not exactly a swindler, certainly not a robber! But, as I before told you, I am a charlatan. So is every man who strives to be richer or greater than he is. I, too, want kindness as much as you do. My bread and my cup are at your service. I will try and keep you unsullied, even by the clean dirt that now and then sticks to me. On the other hand, youth, my young friend, has no right to play the censor; and you must take me as you take the world, without being over-scrupulous and dainty. My present vocation pays well; in fact, I am beginning to lay by. My real name and past life are thoroughly unknown, and as yet unsuspected, in this *quartier*; for though I have seen much of Paris, my career hitherto has passed in other parts of the city. And for the rest, own that I am well disguised. What a benevolent air this bald forehead gives me, eh? True," added Gawtrey, somewhat more seriously, "if I saw how you could support yourself in a broader path of life than that in which I pick out my own way, I might say to you, as a gay man of fashion might say to some sober stripling, — nay, as many a dissolute father says (or ought to say) to his son, — 'It is no reason you should be a sinner because I am not a saint.' In a word, if you were well off in a respectable profession, you might have safer acquaintances than myself; but as it is, upon my word as a plain man, I don't see what you can do better." Gawtrey made this speech with so much frankness and ease, that it seemed greatly to relieve the listener, and when he wound up with "What say you? In fine, my life is that of a great schoolboy, getting into scrapes for the fun of it, and fighting his way out as he best can! Will you see how you like it?" Philip, with a confiding and grateful impulse, put his hand into Gawtrey's. The host shook it cordially, and without saying another word, showed his guest into a

little cabinet where there was a sofa-bed, and they parted for the night.

The new life upon which Philip Morton entered was so odd, so grotesque, and so amusing, that at his age it was, perhaps, natural that he should not be clear-sighted as to its danger.

William Gawtreys was one of those men who are born to exert a certain influence and ascendancy wherever they may be thrown. His vast strength, his redundant health, had a power of themselves, — a moral as well as physical power. He naturally possessed high animal spirits, beneath the surface of which, however, at times, there was visible a certain under-current of malignity and scorn. He had evidently received a superior education, and could command at will the manner of a man not unfamiliar with a politer class of society. From the first hour that Philip had seen him on the top of the coach on the R—— road, this man had attracted his curiosity and interest; the conversation he had heard in the churchyard, the obligations he owed to Gawtreys in his escape from the officers of justice, the time afterwards passed in his society till they separated at the little inn, the rough and hearty kindness Gawtreys had shown him at that period, and the hospitality extended to him now, — all contributed to excite his fancy, and in much, indeed very much, entitled this singular person to his gratitude. Morton, in a word, was fascinated; this man was the only friend he had made. I have not thought it necessary to detail to the reader the conversations that had taken place between them, during that passage of Morton's life when he was before for some days Gawtreys's companion; yet those conversations had sunk deep in his mind. He was struck, and almost awed, by the profound gloom which lurked under Gawtreys's broad humour, — a gloom not of temperament but of knowledge. His views of life, of human justice and human virtue, were (as, to be sure, is commonly the case with men who have had reason to quarrel with the world) dreary and despairing; and Morton's own experience had been so sad that these opinions were more influential than they could ever have been with the happy. However, in this, their second reunion, there was a greater

gayety than in their first; and under his host's roof Morton insensibly, but rapidly, recovered something of the early and natural tone of his impetuous and ardent spirits. Gawtreys himself was generally a boon companion; their society, if not select, was merry. When their evenings were disengaged, Gawtreys was fond of haunting *cafés* and theatres, and Morton was his companion; Birnie (Mr. Gawtreys's partner) never accompanied them. Refreshed by this change of life, the very person of this young man regained its bloom and vigour, as a plant, removed from some choked atmosphere and unwholesome soil where it had struggled for light and air, expands on transplanting; the graceful leaves burst from the long-drooping boughs, and the elastic crest springs upward to the sun in the glory of its young prime. If there was still a certain fiery sternness in his aspect, it had ceased, at least, to be haggard and savage; it even suited the character of his dark and expressive features. He might not have lost the something of the tiger in his fierce temper, but in the sleek hues and the sinewy symmetry of the frame he began to put forth also something of the tiger's beauty.

Mr. Birnie did not sleep in the house; he went home nightly to a lodging at some little distance. We have said but little about this man, for, to all appearance, there was little enough to say; he rarely opened his own mouth except to Gawtreys, with whom Philip often observed him engaged in whispered conferences, to which he was not admitted. His eye, however, was less idle than his lips. It was not a bright eye; on the contrary, it was dull, and, to the unobservant, lifeless, of a pale blue, with a dim film over it, — the eye of a vulture; but it had in it a calm, heavy, stealthy watchfulness, which inspired Morton with great distrust and aversion. Mr. Birnie not only spoke French like a native, but all his habits, his gestures, his tricks of manner, were French, — not the French of good society, but more idiomatic, as it were, and popular. He was not exactly a vulgar person, — he was too silent for that, — but he was evidently of low extraction and coarse breeding; his accomplishments were of a mechanical nature; he was an extraordinary arithmetician, he was a very

skilful chemist, and kept a laboratory at his lodgings; he mended his own clothes and linen with incomparable neatness. Philip suspected him of blacking his own shoes, but that was prejudice. Once he found Morton sketching horses' heads — *pour se désennuyer*; and he made some short criticisms on the drawings, which showed him well acquainted with the art. Philip, surprised, sought to draw him into conversation; but Birnie eluded the attempt, and observed that he had once been an engraver.

Gawtreys himself did not seem to know much of the early life of this person, or at least he did not seem to like much to talk of him. The footstep of Mr. Birnie was gliding, noiseless, and catlike; he had no sociality in him; enjoyed nothing; drank hard, but was never drunk. Somehow or other, he had evidently over Gawtreys an influence little less than that which Gawtreys had over Morton; but it was of a different nature. Morton had conceived an extraordinary affection for his friend, while Gawtreys seemed secretly to dislike Birnie, and to be glad whenever he quitted his presence. It was, in truth, Gawtreys's custom when Birnie retired for the night to rub his hands, bring out the punch-bowl, squeeze the lemons, and while Philip, stretched on the sofa, listened to him, between sleep and waking, to talk on for the hour together, often till daybreak, with that *bizarre* mixture of knavery and feeling, drollery and sentiment, which made the dangerous charm of his society.

One evening as they thus sat together, Morton, after listening for some time to his companion's comments on men and things, said abruptly, —

"Gawtreys, there is so much in you that puzzles me, so much which I find it difficult to reconcile with your present pursuits, that, if I ask no indiscreet confidence, I should like greatly to hear some account of your early life. It would please me to compare it with my own; when I am your age, I will then look back and see what I owed to your example."

"My early life! well, you shall hear it. It will put you on your guard, I hope, betimes against the two rocks of youth, — love and friendship." Then, while squeezing the lemon

into his favourite beverage, which Morton observed he made stronger than usual, Gawtreys thus commenced "THE HISTORY OF A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING."

CHAPTER III.

ALL his success must on himself depend,
He had no money, counsel, guide, or friend;
With spirit high John learned the world to brave,
And in both senses was a ready knave. — CRABBE.

"My grandfather sold walking-sticks and umbrellas in the little passage by Exeter 'Change; he was a man of genius and speculation. As soon as he had scraped together a little money, he lent it to some poor devil with a hard landlord, at twenty per cent, and made him take half the loan in umbrellas or bamboos. By these means he got his foot into the ladder, and climbed upward and upward, till, at the age of forty, he had amassed £5,000. He then looked about for a wife. An honest trader in the Strand, who dealt largely in cotton prints, possessed an only daughter; this young lady had a legacy, from a great-aunt, of £3,220, with a small street in St. Giles's, where the tenants paid weekly (all thieves or rogues, — all, so their rents were sure). Now my grandfather conceived a great friendship for the father of this young lady; gave him a hint as to a new pattern in spotted cottons; enticed him to take out a patent, and lent him £700 for the speculation, applied for the money at the very moment cottons were at their worst, and got the daughter instead of the money, — by which exchange, you see, he won £2,520, to say nothing of the young lady. My grandfather then entered into partnership with the worthy trader, carried on the patent with spirit, and begat two sons. As he grew older, ambition seized him; his sons should be gentlemen, — one was sent to College, the other put into a marching regiment. My grandfather meant

to die worth a plum; but a fever he caught in visiting his tenants in St. Giles's prevented him, and he only left £20,000 equally divided between the sons. My father, the College man" (here Gawtreys paused a moment, took a large draught of the punch, and resumed with a visible effort), — my father, the College man, was a person of rigid principles, bore an excellent character, had a great regard for the world. He married early and respectably. I am the sole fruit of that union. He lived soberly; his temper was harsh and morose, his home gloomy; he was a very severe father, and my mother died before I was ten years old. When I was fourteen, a little old Frenchman came to lodge with us; he had been persecuted under the old *régime* for being a philosopher; he filled my head with odd crotchets which, more or less, have stuck there ever since. At eighteen I was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge. My father was rich enough to have let me go up in the higher rank of a pensioner, but he had lately grown avaricious; he thought that I was extravagant; he made me a sizar, perhaps to spite me. Then, for the first time, those inequalities in life which the Frenchman had dinned into my ears met me practically. A sizar! another name for a dog! I had such strength, health, and spirits that I had more life in my little finger than half the fellow-commoners — genteel, spindle-shanked striplings, who might have passed for a collection of my grandfather's walking-canes — had in their whole bodies. And I often think," continued Gawtreys, "that health and spirits have a great deal to answer for! When we are young we so far resemble savages, who are Nature's young people, that we attach prodigious value to physical advantages. My feats of strength and activity, — the clods I thrashed and the railings I leaped and the boat-races I won, — are they not written in the chronicle of St. John's? These achievements inspired me with an extravagant sense of my own superiority; I could not but despise the rich fellows whom I could have blown down with a sneeze. Nevertheless, there was an impassable barrier between me and them, — a sizar was not a proper associate for the favourites of fortune. But there was one young man, a year younger than myself, of

high birth, and the heir to considerable wealth, who did not regard me with the same supercilious insolence as the rest. His very rank, perhaps, made him indifferent to the little conventional formalities which influence persons who cannot play at football with this round world; he was the wildest youngster in the University, — lamp-breaker, tandem-driver, mob-fighter, — a very devil in short; clever, but not in the reading line; small and slight, but brave as a lion. Congenial habits made us intimate, and I loved him like a brother, — better than a brother, as a dog loves his master. In all our rows I covered him with my body. He had but to say to me, ‘Leap into the water,’ and I would not have stopped to pull off my coat. In short, I loved him as a proud man loves one who stands betwixt him and contempt, — as an affectionate man loves one who stands between him and solitude. To cut short a long story: my friend, one dark night, committed an outrage against discipline of the most unpardonable character. There was a sanctimonious, grave old Fellow of the College crawling home from a tea-party; my friend and another of his set seized, blindfolded, and handcuffed this poor wretch, carried him, *vi et armis*, back to the house of an old maid whom he had been courting for the last ten years, fastened his pigtail (he wore a long one) to the knocker, and so left him. You may imagine the infernal hubbub which his attempts to extricate himself caused in the whole street; the old maid’s old maid-servant, after emptying on his head all the vessels of wrath she could lay her hand to, screamed, ‘Rape and murder!’ The proctor and his bull-dogs came up, released the prisoner, and gave chase to the delinquents, who had incautiously remained near to enjoy the sport. The night was dark, and they reached the College in safety; but they had been tracked to the gates. For this offence I was expelled.”

“Why, you were not concerned in it?” said Philip.

“No; but I was suspected and accused. I could have got off by betraying the true culprits, but my friend’s father was in public life, — a stern, haughty, old statesman; my friend was mortally afraid of him, — the only person he *was* afraid

of. If I had too much insisted on my innocence, I might have set inquiry on the right track. In fine, I was happy to prove my friendship for him. He shook me most tenderly by the hand on parting, and promised never to forget my generous devotion. I went home in disgrace. I need not tell you what *my* father said to me; I do not think he ever loved me from that hour. Shortly after this my uncle, George Gawtreys, the captain, returned from abroad; he took a great fancy to me, and I left my father's house (which had grown insufferable) to live with him. He had been a very handsome man, a gay spendthrift; he had got through his fortune, and now lived on his wits, — he was a professed gambler. His easy temper, his lively humour, fascinated me; he knew the world well; and, like all gamblers, was generous when the dice were lucky, — which, to tell you the truth, they generally were with a man who had no scruples. Though his practices were a little suspected, they had never been discovered. We lived in an elegant apartment, mixed familiarly with men of various ranks, and enjoyed life extremely. I brushed off my college rust, and conceived a taste for expense. I knew not why it was, but in my new existence every one was kind to me; and I had spirits that made me welcome everywhere. I was a scamp, — but a frolicsome scamp, and that is always a popular character. As yet I was not dishonest, but saw dishonesty round me, and it seemed a very pleasant, jolly mode of making money; and now I again fell into contact with the young heir. My college friend was as wild in London as he had been at Cambridge; but the boy-ruffian, though not then twenty years of age, had grown into the man-villain."

Here Gawtreys paused, and frowned darkly.

"He had great natural parts, this young man, — much wit, readiness, and cunning, and he became very intimate with my uncle. He learned of him how to play the dice, and to pack the cards; he paid him £1,000 for the knowledge!"

"How! a cheat? You said he was rich."

"His father was very rich, and he had a liberal allowance; but he was very extravagant; and rich men love gain as well as poor men do! He had no excuse but the grand excuse of

all vice, — **SELFISHNESS**. Young as he was he became the fashion, and he fattened upon the plunder of his equals, who desired the honour of his acquaintance. Now, I had seen my uncle cheat, but I had never imitated his example. When the man of fashion cheated, and made a jest of his earnings and my scruples; when I saw him courted, flattered, honoured, and his acts unsuspected, because his connections embraced half the peerage, the temptation grew strong, but I still resisted it. However, my father always said I was born to be a good-for-nothing, and I could not escape my destiny. And now I suddenly fell in love; you don't know what that is yet, — so much the better for you. The girl was beautiful, and I thought she loved me; perhaps she did; but I was too poor, so her friends said, for marriage. We courted, as the saying is, in the meanwhile. It was my love for her, my wish to deserve her, that made me iron against my friend's example. I was fool enough to speak to him of Mary, to present him to her. This ended in her seduction." (Again Gawtreys paused, and breathed hard.) "I discovered the treachery, I called out the seducer; he sneered and refused to fight the lowborn adventurer. I struck him to the earth — and *then* we fought. I was satisfied by a ball through my side! but *he*," added Gawtreys, rubbing his hands, and with a vindictive chuckle, — "*he* was a cripple for life! When I recovered I found that my foe, whose sick-chamber was crowded with friends and comforters, had taken advantage of my illness to ruin my reputation. He, the swindler, accused me of his own crime. The equivocal character of my uncle confirmed the charge. *Him* his own high-born pupil was enabled to unmask, and his disgrace was visited on me. I left my bed to find my uncle (all disguise over) an avowed partner in a hell, and myself blasted alike in name, love, past, and future. And then, Philip, then I commenced that career which I have trodden since, — the prince of good-fellows and good-for-nothings, with ten thousand aliases, and as many strings to my bow. Society cast me off when I was innocent. Egad, I have had my revenge on society since! Ho, ho, ho!"

The laugh of this man had in it a moral infection. There was a sort of glorying in its deep tone; it was not the hollow hysteric of shame and despair, — it spoke a sanguine joyousness! William Gawtreys was a man whose animal constitution had led him to take animal pleasure in all things; he had enjoyed the poisons he had lived on.

“But your father — surely your father —”

“My father,” interrupted Gawtreys, “refused me the money (but a small sum) that, once struck with the strong impulse of a sincere penitence, I begged of him, to enable me to get an honest living in a humble trade. His refusal soured the penitence; it gave me an excuse for my career, — and conscience grapples to an excuse as a drowning wretch to a straw. And yet this hard father, this cautious, moral, money-loving man, three months afterwards suffered a rogue — almost a stranger — to decoy him into a speculation that promised to bring him fifty per cent. He invested in the traffic of usury what had sufficed to save a hundred such as I am from perdition, and he lost it all. It was nearly his whole fortune; but he lives and has his luxuries still. He cannot speculate, but he can save; he cared not if I starved, for he finds an hourly happiness in starving himself.”

“And your friend,” said Philip, after a pause in which his young sympathies went dangerously with the excuses for his benefactor; “what has become of him, and the poor girl?”

“My friend became a great man; he succeeded to his father’s peerage — a very ancient one — and to a splendid income. He is living still. Well, you shall hear about the *poor girl*! We are told of victims of seduction dying in a workhouse or on a dung-hill, penitent, broken-hearted, and uncommonly ragged and sentimental. It may be a frequent case, but it is not the worst. It is worse, I think, when the fair, penitent, innocent, credulous dupe becomes in her turn the deceiver; when she catches vice from the breath upon which she has hung; when she ripens and mellows and rots away into painted, blazing, staring, wholesale harlotry; when in her turn she ruins warm youth with false smiles and long bills; and when worse — worse than all — when she has chil-

dren, daughters perhaps, brought up to the same trade, cooped, plumped, for some hoary lecher, without a heart in their bosoms, unless a balance for weighing money may be called a heart. Mary became this; and I wish to Heaven she had rather died in an hospital! Her lover polluted her soul as well as her beauty: he found her another lover when he was tired of her. When she was at the age of thirty-six I met her in Paris, with a daughter of sixteen. I was then flush with money, frequenting *salons*, and playing the part of a fine gentleman. She did not know me at first; and she sought my acquaintance. For you must know, my young friend," said Gawtrey, abruptly breaking off the thread of his narrative, "that I am not altogether the low dog you might suppose in seeing me here. At Paris—ah! you don't know Paris—there is a glorious ferment in society in which the dregs are often, uppermost! I came here at the Peace, and here have I resided the greater part of each year ever since. The vast masses of energy and life, broken up by the great thaw of the Imperial system, floating along the tide, are terrible icebergs for the vessel of the State. Some think Napoleonism over,—its effects are only begun. Society is shattered from one end to the other, and I laugh at the little rivets by which they think to keep it together.¹ But to return. Paris, I say, is the atmosphere for adventurers,—new faces and new men are so common here that they excite no impertinent inquiry, it is so usual to see fortunes made in a day and spent in a month; except in certain circles, there is no walking round a man's character to spy out where it wants piercing! Some lean Greek poet put lead in his pockets to prevent being blown away; put gold in your pockets, and at Paris you may defy the sharpest wind in the world,—yea, even the breath of that old Æolus,—Scandal! Well, then, I had money—no matter how I came by it—and health and gayety; and I was well received in the *coteries* that exist in all capitals, but mostly in France, where pleasure is the cement that joins many discordant atoms. Here, I say, I met Mary and her daughter,

¹ This passage was written at a period when the dynasty of Louis Philippe seemed the most assured, and Napoleonism was indeed considered extinct.

by my old friend — the daughter, still innocent, but, *sacré!* in what an element of vice! We knew each other's secrets, Mary and I, and kept them; she thought me a greater knave than I was, and she intrusted to me her intention of selling her child to a rich English marquis. On the other hand, the poor girl confided to me her horror of the scenes she witnessed and the snares that surrounded her. What do you think preserved her pure from all danger? Bah! you will never guess! It was partly because, if example corrupts, it as often deters, but principally because she loved. A girl who loves one man purely has about her an amulet which defies the advances of the profligate. There was a handsome young Italian, an artist, who frequented the house, — he was the man. I had to choose, then, between mother and daughter; I chose the last."

Philip seized hold of Gawtreys hand, grasped it warmly, and the good-for-nothing continued, —

"Do you know, that I loved that girl as well as I had ever loved the mother, though in another way; she *was* what I fancied the mother *to be*; still more fair, more graceful, more winning, with a heart as full of love as her mother's had been of vanity. I loved that child as if she had been my own daughter. I induced her to leave her mother's house, I secreted her, I saw her married to the man she loved, I gave her away, and saw no more of her for several months."

"Why?"

"Because I spent them in prison! The young people could not live upon air; I gave them what I had, and in order to do more I did something which displeased the police; I narrowly escaped that time; but I am popular, very popular, and with plenty of witnesses, not over scrupulous, I got off! When I was released, I would not go to see them, for my clothes were ragged: the police still watched me, and I would not do *them* harm in the world! Ay, poor wretches! they struggled so hard; he could get very little by his art, though, I believe, he was a cleverish fellow at it, and the money I had given them could not last forever. They lived near the Champs Elysées, and at night I used to steal out and look at them

through the window. They seemed so happy and so handsome and so good; but he looked sickly, and I saw that, like all Italians, he languished for his own warm climate. But man is born to act as well as to contemplate," pursued Gawtrey, changing his tone into the *allegro*, "and I was soon driven into my old ways, though in a lower line. I went to London, just to give my reputation an airing, and when I returned, pretty flush again, the poor Italian was dead, and Fanny was a widow, with one boy, and *enceinte* with a second child. So then I sought her again, for her mother had found her out, and was at her with her devilish kindness; but Heaven was merciful, and took her away from both of us. She died in giving birth to a girl, and her last words were uttered to me, imploring me—the adventurer, the charlatan, the good-for-nothing—to keep her child from the clutches of her own mother. Well, sir, I did what I could for both the children; but the boy was consumptive, like his father, and sleeps at Père-la-Chaise. The girl is here,—you shall see her some day. Poor Fanny! if ever the devil will let me, I shall reform for her sake; meanwhile, for her sake I must get grist for the mill. My story is concluded, for I need not tell you all of my pranks, of all the parts I have played in life. I have never been a murderer or a burglar or a highway robber, or what the law calls a thief. I can only say, as I said before, I have lived upon my wits, and they have been a tolerable capital on the whole. I have been an actor, a money-lender, a physician, a professor of animal magnetism (*that* was lucrative till it went out of fashion,—perhaps it will come in again); I have been a lawyer, a house-agent, a dealer in curiosities and china; I have kept a hotel; I have set up a weekly newspaper; I have seen almost every city in Europe, and made acquaintance with some of its jails; but a man who has plenty of brains generally falls on his legs."

"And your father?" said Philip; and here he spoke to Gawtrey of the conversation he had overheard in the churchyard, but on which a scruple of natural delicacy had hitherto kept him silent.

"Well, now," said his host, while a slight blush rose to his

cheeks, "I will tell you that though to my father's sternness and avarice I attribute many of my faults, I yet always had a sort of love for him; and when in London I accidentally heard that he was growing blind, and living with an artful old jade of a housekeeper, who might send him to rest with a dose of magnesia the night after she had coaxed him to make a will in her favour. I sought him out, and—but you say you heard what passed."

"Yes; and I heard him also call you by name when it was too late, and I saw the tears on his cheeks."

"Did you? Will you swear to that?" exclaimed Gawtrety, with vehemence; then, shading his brow with his hand, he fell into a reverie that lasted some moments.

"If anything happen to me, Philip," he said abruptly, "perhaps he may yet be a father to poor Fanny; and if he takes to her, she will repay him for whatever pain I may perhaps have cost him. Stop! now I think of it, I will write down his address for you; never forget it. There! It is time to go to bed."

Gawtrety's tale made a deep impression on Philip. He was too young, too inexperienced, too much borne away by the passion of the narrator, to see that Gawtrety had less cause to blame Fate than himself. True, he had been unjustly implicated in the disgrace of an unworthy uncle, but he had lived with that uncle, though he knew him to be a common cheat; true, he had been betrayed by a friend, but he had before known that friend to be a man without principle or honour. But what wonder that an ardent boy saw nothing of this, — saw only the good heart that had saved a poor girl from vice, and sighed to relieve a harsh and avaricious parent? Even the hints that Gawtrety unawares let fall of practices scarcely covered by the jovial phrase of "a great schoolboy's scrapes," either escaped the notice of Philip, or were charitably construed by him, in the compassion and the ignorance of a young, hasty, and grateful heart.

CHAPTER IV.

AND she's a stranger :
Women, beware women. — MIDDLETON.

As we love our youngest children best,
So the last fruit of our affection,
Wherever we bestow it, is most strong ;
Since 't is indeed our latest harvest-home,
Last merriment 'fore winter !

WEBSTER: *Devil's Law Case.*

I would fain know what kind of thing a man's heart is.
I will report to you: 't is a thing framed
With divers corners ! — ROWLEY.

I HAVE said that Gawtreys tale made a deep impression on Philip; that impression was increased by subsequent conversations, more frank even than their talk had hitherto been. There was certainly about this man a fatal charm which concealed his vices. It arose, perhaps, from the perfect combinations of his physical frame, — from a health which made his spirits buoyant and hearty under all circumstances, and a blood so fresh, so sanguine, that it could not fail to keep the pores of the heart open. But he was not the less — for all his kindly impulses and generous feelings, and despite the manner in which, naturally anxious to make the least unfavourable portrait of himself to Philip, he softened and glossed over the practices of his life — a thorough and complete rogue, a dangerous, desperate, reckless dare-devil. It was easy to see when anything crossed him, by the cloud on his shaggy brow, by the swelling of the veins on the forehead, by the dilation of the broad nostril, that he was one to cut his way through every obstacle to an end, — choleric, impetuous, fierce, determined. Such, indeed, were the qualities that made him respected among his associates, as his more bland and humorous ones made him beloved. He was, in fact, the incarnation

of that great spirit which the laws of the world raise up against the world, and by which the world's injustice on a large scale is awfully chastised; on a small scale, merely nibbled at and harassed, as the rat that gnaws the hoof of the elephant, — the spirit which, on a vast theatre, rises up, gigantic and sublime, in the heroes of war and revolution, in Mirabeaus, Marats, Napoleons; on a minor stage, it shows itself in demagogues, fanatical philosophers, and mob-writers. And on the forbidden boards before whose reeking lamps outcasts sit, at once audience and actors, it never produced a knave more consummate in his part, or carrying it off with more buskined dignity, than William Gawtrety. I call him by his aboriginal name; as for his other appellations, Bacchus himself had not so many!

One day, a lady, richly dressed, was ushered by Mr. Birnie into the *bureau* of Mr. Love, *alias* Gawtrety. Philip was seated by the window, reading, for the first time, the "Candide," — that work, next to "Rasselas," the most hopeless and gloomy of the sports of genius with mankind. The lady seemed rather embarrassed when she perceived Mr. Love was not alone. She drew back, and, drawing her veil still more closely round her, said, in French, —

"Pardon me, I would wish a private conversation."

Philip rose to withdraw, when the lady, observing him with eyes whose lustre shone through the veil, said gently, —

"But perhaps the young gentleman is discreet."

"He is not discreet, he is discretion! — my adopted son. You may confide in him, upon my honour you may, madam!" and Mr. Love placed his hand on his heart.

"He is very young," said the lady, in a tone of involuntary compassion, as, with a very white hand, she unclasped the buckle of her cloak.

"He can the better understand the curse of celibacy," returned Mr. Love, smiling.

The lady lifted part of her veil, and discovered a handsome mouth and a set of small, white teeth; for she, too, smiled, though gravely, as she turned to Morton, and said, —

"You seem, sir, more fitted to be a votary of the temple than

one of its officers. However, Monsieur Love, let there be no mistake between us; I do not come here to form a marriage, but to prevent one. I understand that M. the Vicomte de Vaudemont has called into request your services. I am one of the Vicomte's family; we are all anxious that he should not contract an engagement of the strange, and, pardon me, unbecoming character which must stamp a union formed at a public office."

"I assure you, madam," said Mr. Love, with dignity, "that we have contributed to the very first —"

"*Mon Dieu!*" interrupted the lady, with much impatience, "spare me a eulogy on your establishment. I have no doubt it is very respectable, and for *grisettes* and *épiciers* may do extremely well. But the Vicomte is a man of birth and connections. In a word, what he contemplates is preposterous. I know not what fee Monsieur Love expects; but if he contrive to amuse M. de Vaudemont, and to frustrate every connection he proposes to form, that fee, whatever it may be, shall be doubled. Do you understand me?"

"Perfectly, madam; yet it is not your offer that will bias me, but the desire to oblige so charming a lady."

"It is agreed, then?" said the lady, carelessly; and as she spoke she again glanced at Philip.

"If Madame will call again, I will inform her of my plans," said Mr. Love.

"Yes, I will call again. Good morning." As she rose and passed Philip, she wholly put aside her veil, and looked at him with a gaze entirely free from coquetry, but curious, searching, and perhaps admiring, — the look that an artist may give to a picture that seems of more value than the place where he finds it would seem to indicate. The countenance of the lady herself was fair and noble, and Philip felt a strange thrill at his heart as, with a slight inclination of her head, she turned from the room.

"Ah!" said Gawtreay, laughing, "this is not the first time I have been paid by relations to break off the marriages I had formed. Egad! if one could open a *bureau* to make married people single, one would soon be a Cræsus! Well, then, this

decides me to complete the union between M. Goupille and Mademoiselle de Courval. I had balanced a little hitherto between the *épicier* and the Vicomte. Now I will conclude matters. Do you know, Phil, I think you have made a conquest?"

"Pooh!" said Philip, colouring.

In effect, that very evening Mr. Love saw both the *épicier* and Adèle, and fixed the marriage-day. As M. Goupille was a person of great distinction in the Faubourg, this wedding was one upon which Mr. Love congratulated himself greatly; and he cheerfully accepted an invitation for himself and his partners to honour the *noces* with their presence.

A night or two before the day fixed for the marriage of M. Goupille and the aristocratic Adèle, when Mr. Birnie had retired, Gawtrety made his usual preparations for enjoying himself. But this time the cigar and the punch seemed to fail of their effect. Gawtrety remained moody and silent; and Morton was thinking of the bright eyes of the lady who was so much interested against the *amours* of the Vicomte de Vaudemont.

At last, Gawtrety broke silence.

"My young friend," said he, "I told you of my little *protégée*. I have been buying toys for her this morning; she is a beautiful creature; to-morrow is her birthday, — she will then be six years old. But — but —" here Gawtrety sighed — "I fear she is not all right here," and he touched his forehead.

"I should like much to see her," said Philip, not noticing the latter remark.

"And you shall — you shall come with me to-morrow. Heigho! I should not like to die, for her sake!"

"Does her wretched relation attempt to regain her?"

"Her relation! No; *she* is no more, — she died about two years since! Poor Mary! I — well, this is folly. But Fanny is at present in a convent; they are all kind to her, but then I pay well; if I were dead, and the pay stopped, — again I ask, what would become of her, unless, as I before said, my father —"

"But you are making a fortune now?"

"If this lasts — yes; but I live in fear. The police of this cursed city are lynx-eyed; however, that is the bright side of the question."

"Why not have the child with you, since you love her so much? She would be a great comfort to you."

"Is this a place for a child — a girl?" said Gawtrety, stamping his foot impatiently. "I should go mad if I saw that villanous deadman's eye bent upon her!"

"You speak of Birnie. How can you endure him?"

"When you are my age you will know why we endure what we dread, why we make friends of those who else would be most horrible foes: no, no! nothing can deliver me of this man but Death. And — and —" added Gawtrety, turning pale, "I cannot murder a man who eats my bread. There are stronger ties, my lad, than affection, that bind men, like galley-slaves, together. He who can hang you puts the halter round your neck and leads you by it like a dog."

A shudder came over the young listener. And what dark secrets, known only to those two, had bound, to a man seemingly his subordinate and tool, the strong will and resolute temper of William Gawtrety?

"But, begone, dull care!" exclaimed Gawtrety, rousing himself. "And, after all, Birnie is a useful fellow, and dare no more turn against me than I against him! Why don't you drink more?"

"Oh, have you e'er heard of the famed Captain Wattle?"

and Gawtrety broke out into a loud Bacchanalian hymn, in which Philip could find no mirth, and from which the songster suddenly paused to exclaim, —

"Mind you say nothing about Fanny to Birnie; my secrets with him are not of *that* nature. He could not hurt her, poor lamb! it is true — at least, as far as I can foresee. But one can never feel too sure of one's lamb, if one once introduces it to the butcher!"

The next day being Sunday, the *bureau* was closed, and Philip and Gawtrety repaired to the convent. It was a dismal-looking place as to the exterior; but, within, there was a large

garden, well kept, and, notwithstanding the winter, it seemed fair and refreshing compared with the polluted streets. The window of the room into which they were shown looked upon the green sward, with walls covered with ivy at the farther end. And Philip's own childhood came back to him as he gazed on the quiet of the lonely place.

The door opened, an infant voice was heard, a voice of glee, of rapture; and a child, light and beautiful as a fairy, bounded to Gawtreys breast.

Nestling there, she kissed his face, his hands, his clothes, with a passion that did not seem to belong to her age, laughing and sobbing almost at a breath.

On his part, Gawtreys appeared equally affected: he stroked down her hair with his huge hand, calling her all manner of pet names, in a tremulous voice that vainly struggled to be gay.

At length he took the toys he had brought with him from his capacious pockets, and strewing them on the floor, fairly stretched his vast bulk along; while the child tumbled over him, sometimes grasping at the toys, and then again returning to his bosom, and laying her head there, looked up quietly into his eyes, as if the joy were too much for her.

Morton, unheeded by both, stood by with folded arms. He thought of his lost and ungrateful brother, and muttered to himself, —

“Fool! when she is older, she will forsake him!”

Fanny betrayed in her face the Italian origin of her father. She had that exceeding richness of complexion which, though not common even in Italy, is only to be found in the daughters of that land, and which harmonized well with the purple lustre of her hair and the full, clear iris of the dark eyes. Never were parted cherries brighter than her dewy lips; and the colour of the open neck and the rounded arms was of a whiteness still more dazzling from the darkness of the hair and the carnation of the glowing cheek.

Suddenly Fanny started from Gawtreys arms, and running up to Morton, gazed at him wistfully, and said, in French, —

“Who are you? Do you come from the moon? I think

you do." Then, stopping abruptly, she broke into a verse of a nursery-song, which she chanted with a low, listless tone, as if she were not conscious of the sense. As she thus sang, Morton, looking at her, felt a strange and painful doubt seize him. The child's eyes, though soft, were so vacant in their gaze.

"And why do I come from the moon?" said he.

"Because you look sad and cross. I don't like you, I don't like the moon; it gives me a pain here!" and she put her hand to her temples. "Have you got anything for Fanny, — poor, poor Fanny?" and, dwelling on the epithet, she shook her head mournfully.

"You are rich, Fanny, with all those toys."

"Am I? Everybody calls me poor Fanny, — everybody but Papa;" and she ran again to Gawtreys, and laid her head on his shoulder.

"She calls me papa!" said Gawtreys, kissing her; "you hear it? Bless her!"

"And you never kiss any one but Fanny, — you have no other little girl?" said the child, earnestly, and with a look less vacant than that which had saddened Morton.

"No other; no, nothing under heaven, and perhaps above it, but you!" and he clasped her in his arms. "But," he added, after a pause, — "but mind me, Fanny, you must like this gentleman. He will be always good to you; and he had a little brother whom he was as fond of as I am of you."

"No, I won't like him; I won't like anybody but you and my sister!"

"Sister! who is your sister?"

The child's face relapsed into an expression almost of idiocy. "I don't know, I never saw her. I hear her sometimes, but I don't understand what she says. Hush! come here!" and she stole to the window on tiptoe. Gawtreys followed and looked out.

"Do you hear her, now?" said Fanny. "What does she say?"

As the girl spoke some bird among the evergreens uttered a shrill, plaintive cry, rather than song, — a sound which the

thrush occasionally makes in the winter, and which seems to express something of fear and pain and impatience.

"What does she say, — can you tell me?" asked the child.

"Pooh! that is a bird; why do you call it your sister?"

"I don't know! because it is — because it — because — I don't know — is it not in pain? Do something for it, Papa!"

Gawtrey glanced at Morton, whose face betokened his deep pity, and creeping up to him, whispered, —

"Do you think she is really touched here? No, no, she will outgrow it, — I am sure she will!"

Morton sighed.

Fanny by this time had again seated herself in the middle of the floor, and arranged her toys, but without seeming to take pleasure in them.

At last Gawtrey was obliged to depart. The lay sister who had charge of Fanny was summoned into the parlour; and then the child's manner entirely changed. Her face grew purple; she sobbed with as much anger as grief. "She would not leave Papa; she would not go, that she would not!"

"It is always so," whispered Gawtrey to Morton, in an abashed and apologetic voice. "It is so difficult to get away from her. Just go and talk with her while I steal out."

Morton went to her, as she struggled with the patient, good-natured sister, and began to soothe and caress her, till she turned on him her large humid eyes, and said mournfully, —

"*Tu es méchant, tu.* Poor Fanny!"

"But this pretty doll —" began the sister.

The child looked at it joylessly.

"And Papa is going to die!"

"Whenever Monsieur goes," whispered the nun, "she always says that he is dead, and cries herself quietly to sleep; when Monsieur returns, she says he is come to life again. Some one, I suppose, once talked to her about death; and she thinks when she loses sight of any one, that *that* is death."

"Poor child!" said Morton, with a trembling voice.

The child looked up, smiled, stroked his cheek with her little hand, and said, —

"Thank you! Yes! *poor* Fanny! Ah, he is going — see! let me go too; *tu es méchant*."

"But," said Morton, detaining her gently, "do you know that you give him pain? You make him cry by showing pain yourself. Don't make him so sad!"

The child seemed struck, hung down her head for a moment, as if in thought, and then, jumping from Morton's lap, ran to Gawtrety, put up her pouting lips, and said, —

"One kiss more!"

Gawtrety kissed her, and turned away his head.

"Fanny is a good girl!" and Fanny, as she spoke, went back to Morton, and put her little fingers into her eyes, as if either to shut out Gawtrety's retreat from her sight, or to press back her tears.

"Give me the doll now, sister Marie."

Morton smiled and sighed, placed the child, who struggled no more, in the nun's arms, and left the room; but as he closed the door he looked back, and saw that Fanny had escaped from the sister, thrown herself on the floor, and was crying, but not loud.

"Is she not a little darling?" said Gawtrety, as they gained the street.

"She is, indeed, a most beautiful child!"

"And you will love her if I leave her penniless," said Gawtrety, abruptly. "It was your love for your mother and your brother that made me like *you* from the first. Ay," continued Gawtrety, in a tone of great earnestness, — "ay, and whatever may happen to me, I will strive and keep you, my poor lad, harmless; and what is better, innocent even of such matters as sit light enough on my own well-seasoned conscience. In turn, if ever you have the power, be good to her, — yes, be good to her! and I won't say a harsh word to you if ever you like to turn king's evidence against myself."

"Gawtrety!" said Morton, reproachfully, and almost fiercely.

"Bah! such things are! But tell me honestly, do you think she is *very* strange, very deficient?"

"I have not seen enough of her to judge," answered Morton, *evasively*.

"She is so changeful," persisted Gawtrety. "Sometimes you would say that she was above her age, she comes out with such thoughtful, clever things; then, the next moment, she throws me into despair. These nuns are very skilful in education, — at least, they are said to be so. The doctors give me hope, too. You see, her poor mother was very unhappy at the time of her birth, — delirious, indeed; that may account for it. I often fancy that it is the constant excitement which her state occasions me that makes me love her so much. You see she is one who can never shift for herself. I *must* get money for her; I have left a little already with the superior, and I would not touch it to save myself from famine! If she has money people will be kind enough to her. And then," continued Gawtrety, "you must perceive that she loves nothing in the world but me, — me, whom nobody else loves! Well, well, now to the shop again!"

On returning home the *bonne* informed them that a lady had called, and asked both for M. Love and the young gentleman, and seemed much chagrined at missing both. By the description, Morton guessed she was the fair *incognita*, and felt disappointed at having lost the interview.

CHAPTER V.

THE cursed carle was at his wonted trade,
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said;
But when he saw, in goodly gear array'd,
The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
His countenance fell. — Thomson: *Castle of Indolence*.

THE morning rose that was to unite M. Goupille with Mademoiselle Adèle de Courval. The ceremony was performed, and bride and bridegroom went through that trying ordeal with becoming gravity. Only the elegant Adèle seemed more unaffectedly agitated than Mr. Love could

well account for; she was very nervous in church, and more often turned her eyes to the door than to the altar. Perhaps she wanted to run away; but it was either too late or too early for the proceeding. The rite performed, the happy pair and their friends adjourned to the Cadran Bleu, that *restaurant* so celebrated in the festivities of the good citizens of Paris. Here Mr. Love had ordered, at the *épicier's* expense, a most tasteful entertainment.

"*Sacré!* but you have not played the economist, Monsieur Lofe," said M. Goupille, rather querulously, as he glanced at the long room adorned with artificial flowers, and the table *à cinquante couverts*.

"Bah!" replied Mr. Love, "you can retrench afterwards. "Think of the fortune she brought you."

"It is a pretty sum, certainly," said M. Goupille, "and the notary is perfectly satisfied."

"There is not a marriage in Paris that does me more credit," said Mr. Love; and he marched off to receive the compliments and congratulations that awaited him among such of the guests as were aware of his good offices. The Vicomte de Vaudemont was of course not present. He had not been near Mr. Love since Adèle had accepted the *épicier*. But Madame Beavor, in a white bonnet lined with lilac, was hanging, sentimentally, on the arm of the Pole, who looked very grand with his white favour; and Mr. Higgins had been introduced by Mr. Love to a little dark Creole, who wore paste diamonds, and had very languishing eyes; so that Mr. Love's heart might well swell with satisfaction at the prospect of the various blisses to come, which might owe their origin to his benevolence. In fact, that arch-priest of the Temple of Hymen was never more great than he was that day; never did his establishment seem more solid, his reputation more popular, or his fortune more sure. He was the life of the party.

The banquet over, the revellers prepared for a dance. M. Goupille, in tights, still tighter than he usually wore, and of a rich nankeen, quite new, with striped silk stockings, opened the ball with the lady of a rich *pâtissier* in the same Faubourg; M. Love took out the bride. The evening advanced;

and after several other dances of ceremony, M. Goupille conceived himself entitled to dedicate one to connubial affection. A country-dance was called, and the *épiciér* claimed the fair hand of the gentle Adèle. About this time, two persons, not hitherto perceived, had quietly entered the room, and, standing near the doorway, seemed examining the dancers, as if in search for some one. They bobbed their heads up and down, to and fro, now stopped, now stood on tiptoe. The one was a tall, large-whiskered, fair-haired man; the other, a little, thin, neatly-dressed person, who kept his hand on the arm of his companion, and whispered to him from time to time. The whiskered gentleman replied in a guttural tone, which proclaimed his origin to be German. The busy dancers did not perceive the strangers. The bystanders did, and a hum of curiosity circled round; who could they be? Who had invited them? They were new faces in the Faubourg, — perhaps relations to Adèle?

In high delight the fair bride was skipping down the middle, while M. Goupille, wiping his forehead with care, admired her agility; when, lo and behold! the whiskered gentleman I have described abruptly advanced from his companion, and cried, —

“La voilà! sacré tonnerre!”

At that voice, at that apparition, the bride halted; so suddenly indeed, that she had not time to put down both feet, but remained with one high in the air, while the other sustained itself on the light fantastic toe. The company naturally imagined this to be an operatic flourish, which called for approbation. M. Love, who was thundering down behind her, cried, “Bravo!” and as the well-grown gentleman had to make a sweep to avoid disturbing her equilibrium, he came full against the whiskered stranger, and sent him off as a bat sends a ball.

“*Mon Dieu!*” cried M. Goupille. “*Ma douce amie!* she has fainted away!” And, indeed, Adèle had no sooner recovered her balance than she resigned it once more into the arms of the startled Pole, who was happily at hand.

In the meantime, the German stranger, who had saved

himself from falling by coming with his full force upon the toes of Mr. Higgins, again advanced to the spot, and rudely seizing the fair bride by the arm, exclaimed, —

"No sham if you please, Madame! speak! What the devil have you done with the money?"

"Really, sir," said M. Goupille, drawing up his cravat, "this is very extraordinary conduct! What have you got to say to this lady's money? — it is *my* money now, sir!"

"Oho! it is, is it? we'll soon see that. Approchez donc, Monsieur Favart, faites votre devoir."¹

At these words the small companion of the stranger slowly sauntered to the spot, while at the sound of his name and the tread of his step the throng gave way to the right and left. For M. Favart was one of the most renowned chiefs of the great Parisian police, — a man worthy to be the contemporary of the illustrious Vidocq.

"*Calmez vous, messieurs*; do not be alarmed, ladies," said this gentleman, in the mildest of all human voices; and certainly no oil dropped on the waters ever produced so tranquilizing an effect as that small, feeble, gentle tenor. The Pole, in especial, who was holding the fair bride with both his arms, shook all over, and seemed about to let his burden gradually slide to the floor, when M. Favart, looking at him with a benevolent smile, said, —

"Aha, mon brave! c'est toi. Restez donc. Restez, tenant toujours la dame!"²

The Pole, thus condemned, in the French idiom, "*always* to hold the *dame*," mechanically raised the arms he had previously dejected, and the police officer, with an approving nod of the head, said, —

"Bon! ne bougez point; c'est ça!"³

M. Goupille, in equal surprise and indignation to see his better half thus consigned, without any care to his own marital feelings, to the arms of another, was about to snatch her

¹ "Approach, then, Monsieur Favart, and do your duty."

² "Aha, my fine fellow! it's you. Stay, then. Stay, always holding the dame."

³ "Good! don't stir; that's it."

from the Pole, when M. Favart, touching him on the breast with his little finger, said, in the suavest manner, —

“*Mon bourgeois*, meddle not with what does not concern you!”

“With what does not concern *me*!” repeated M. Goupille, drawing himself up to so great a stretch that he seemed pulling off his tights the wrong way. “Explain yourself, if you please! This lady is my wife!”

“Say that again, — that’s all!” cried the whiskered stranger, in most horrible French, and with a furious grimace, as he shook both his fists just under the nose of the *épicier*.

“Say it again, sir,” said M. Goupille, by no means daunted; “and why should I not say it again? That lady is my wife!”

“You lie! *she is mine*!” cried the German; and bending down, he caught the fair Adèle from the Pole with as little ceremony as if she had never had a great-grandfather a marquis, and giving her a shake that might have roused the dead, thundered out, —

“Speak! Madame Bihl! Are you my wife or not?”

“*Monstre*!” murmured Adèle, opening her eyes.

“There! you hear! she owns me!” said the German, appealing to the company with a triumphant air.

“C’est vrai!” said the soft voice of the policeman. “And now, pray, don’t let us disturb your amusements any longer. We have a *fiacre* at the door. Remove your lady, Monsieur Bihl.”

“Monsieur Lofe! Monsieur Lofe!” cried, or rather screeched, the *épicier*, darting across the room, and seizing the *chef* by the tail of his coat, just as he was half way through the door, “come back! Quelle mauvaise plaisanterie me faites-vous ici?¹ Did you not tell me that lady was single? Am I married or not? Do I stand on my head or my heels?”

“Hush! hush! *mon bon bourgeois*!” whispered Mr. Love; “all shall be explained to-morrow!”

“Who is this gentleman?” asked M. Favart, approaching

¹ “What scurvy trick is this you’re playing me?”

Mr. Love, who, seeing himself in for it, suddenly jerked off the *épicier*, thrust his hands down into his breeches' pockets, buried his chin in his cravat, elevated his eyebrows, screwed in his eyes, and puffed out his cheeks, so that the astonished M. Goupille really thought himself bewitched, and literally did not recognize the face of the match-maker.

"Who is this gentleman?" repeated the little officer, standing beside, or rather below, Mr. Love, and looking so diminutive by the contrast, that you might have fancied that the Priest of Hymen had only to breathe to blow him away.

"Who should he be, Monsieur?" cried, with great pertness, Madame Rosalie Caumartin, coming to the relief, with the generosity of her sex. "This is M. Love, — *Anglais célèbre*. What have you to say against him?"

"He has got five hundred francs of mine!" cried the *épicier*.

The policeman scanned Mr. Love, with great attention. "So you are in Paris again? — Hein! vous jouez toujours votre rôle!"¹

"*Ma foi!*" said Mr. Love, boldly; "I don't understand what Monsieur means; my character is well known, — go and inquire it in London, ask the Secretary of Foreign Affairs what is said of me, inquire of my Ambassador, demand of my —"

"Votre passeport, Monsieur?"

"It is at home. A gentleman does not carry his passport in his pocket when he goes to a ball!"

"I will call and see it. *Au revoir!* Take my advice and leave Paris; I think I have seen you somewhere!"

"Yet I have never had the honour to marry Monsieur!" said Mr. Love, with a polite bow.

In return for his joke, the policeman gave Mr. Love one look. It was a quiet look, very quiet; but Mr. Love seemed uncommonly affected by it; he did not say another word, but found himself outside the house in a twinkling. M. Favart turned round and saw the Pole making himself as small as possible behind the goodly proportions of Madame Beavor.

¹ "You're always acting your part."

"What name does that gentleman go by?"

"So—vo—lofski, the heroic Pole," cried Madame Beavor, with sundry misgivings at the unexpected cowardice of so great a patriot.

"*Hein!* take care of yourselves, ladies. I have nothing against that person this time. But M. Latour has served his apprenticeship at the galleys, and is no more a Pole than I am a Jew."

"And this lady's fortune!" cried M. Goupille, pathetically; "the settlements are all made, the notaries all paid. I am sure there must be some mistake."

M. Bihl, who had by this time restored his lost Helen to her senses, stalked up to the *épiciier*, dragging the lady along with him.

"Sir, there is no mistake! But when I have got the money, if you like to have the lady you are welcome to her."

"*Monstre!*" again muttered the fair Adèle.

"The long and the short of it," said M. Favart, "is that M. Bihl is a *brave garçon*, and has been half over the world as a courier."

"A courier!" exclaimed several voices.

"Madame was nursery-governess to an English *milord*. They married, and quarrelled, — no harm in that, *mes amis*; nothing more common. M. Bihl is a very faithful fellow; nursed his last master in an illness that ended fatally, because he travelled with his doctor. *Milord* left him a handsome legacy; he retired from service, and fell ill perhaps from idleness or beer. Is not that the story, Monsieur Bihl?"

"He was always drunk, — the wretch!" sobbed Adèle.

"That was to drown my domestic sorrows," said the German; "and when I was sick in my bed, Madame ran off with my money. Thanks to Monsieur, I have found both, and I wish you a very good night."

"Dansez-vous toujours, *mes amis*," said the officer, bowing. And following Adèle and her spouse, the little man left the room, — where he had caused, in chests so broad and limbs so doughty, much the same consternation as that which some diminutive ferret occasions in a burrow of rabbits twice his size.

Morton had outstayed Mr. Love; but he thought it unnecessary to linger long after that gentleman's departure; and in the general hubbub that ensued, he crept out unperceived, and soon arrived at the *bureau*. He found Mr. Love and Mr. Birnie already engaged in packing up their effects.

"Why! when did *you* leave?" said Morton to Mr. Birnie.

"I saw the policeman enter."

"And why the deuce did not you tell us?" said Gawtrety.

"Every man for himself. Besides, Mr. Love was dancing," replied Mr. Birnie, with a dull glance of disdain.

"Philosophy," muttered Gawtrety, thrusting his dress-coat into his trunk; then, suddenly changing his voice, "Ha! ha! it was a very good joke after all, — own I did it well. Ecod! if he had not given me that look, I think I should have turned the tables on him. But those d—d fellows learn of the mad doctors how to tame us. Faith, my heart went down to my shoes; yet I'm no coward!"

"But after all he evidently did not know you," said Morton; "and what has he to say against you? Your trade is a strange one, but not dishonest. Why give up as if —"

"My young friend," interrupted Gawtrety, "whether the officer comes after us or not, our trade is ruined; that infernal Adèle, with her fabulous *grandmaman*, has done for us. Goupille will blow the temple about our ears. No help for it, — eh, Birnie?"

"None."

"Go to bed, Philip: we'll call thee at daybreak, for we must make clear work before our neighbours open their shutters."

Reclined, but half undressed, on his bed in the little cabinet, Morton revolved the events of the evening. The thought that he should see no more of that white hand and that lovely mouth, which still haunted his recollection as appertaining to the *incognita*, greatly indisposed him towards the abrupt flight intended by Gawtrety, while (so much had his faith in that person depended upon respect for his confident daring, and so thoroughly fearless was Morton's own nature) he felt himself greatly shaken in his allegiance to the

chief, by recollecting the effect produced on his valour by a single glance from the instrument of law. He had not yet lived long enough to be aware that men are sometimes the Representatives of Things; that what the scytale was to the Spartan hero, a sheriff's writ often is to a Waterloo medallist; that a Bow Street runner will enter the foulest den where Murder sits with his fellows, and pick out his prey with the beck of his forefinger; that, in short, the thing called LAW, once made tangible and present, rarely fails to palsy the fierce heart of the thing called CRIME. For Law is the symbol of all mankind reared against One Foe, — the Man of Crime. Not yet aware of this truth, nor, indeed, in the least suspecting Gawtreys of worse offences than those of a charlatanic and equivocal profession, the young man mused over his protector's cowardice in disdain and wonder; till, wearied with conjectures, distrust, and shame at his own strange position of obligation to one whom he could not respect, he fell asleep.

When he woke, he saw the gray light of dawn that streamed cheerlessly through his shutterless window struggling with the faint ray of a candle that Gawtreys, shading with his hand, held over the sleeper. He started up, and, in the confusion of waking and the imperfect light by which he beheld the strong features of Gawtreys, half imagined it was a foe who stood before him.

"Take care, man!" said Gawtreys, as Morton, in this belief, grasped his arm. "You have a precious rough gripe of your own. Be quiet, will you? I have a word to say to you." Here Gawtreys, placing the candle on a chair, returned to the door and closed it.

"Look you," he said in a whisper, "I have nearly run through my circle of invention, and my wit, fertile as it is, can present to me little encouragement in the future. The eyes of this Favart once on me, every disguise and every double will not long avail. I dare not return to London; I am too well known in Brussels, Berlin, and Vienna —"

"But," interrupted Morton, raising himself on his arm, and fixing his dark eyes upon his host, — "but you have told

me again and again that you have committed no crime; why then be so fearful of discovery?"

"Why," repeated Gawtrety, with a slight hesitation which he instantly overcame, "why! have not you yourself learned that appearances have the effect of crimes? Were you not chased as a thief when I rescued you from your foe the law? Are you not, though a boy in years, under an *alias*, and an exile from your own land? And how can you put these austere questions to me, who am growing gray in the endeavour to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, subsistence from poverty? I repeat that there are reasons why I must avoid, for the present, the great capitals. I must sink in life, and take to the provinces. Birnie is sanguine as ever; but he is a terrible sort of comforter! Enough of that. Now to yourself: our savings are less than you might expect; to be sure, Birnie has been treasurer, and I have laid by a little for Fanny, which I will rather starve than touch. There remain, however, one hundred and fifty napoleons, and our effects, sold at a fourth their value, will fetch one hundred and fifty more. Here is your share. I have compassion on you. I told you I would bear you harmless and innocent. Leave us while yet time."

It seemed, then, to Morton that Gawtrety had divined his thoughts of shame and escape of the previous night; perhaps Gawtrety had: and such is the human heart, that, instead of welcoming the very release he had half contemplated, now that it was offered him Philip shrank from it as a base desertion.

"Poor Gawtrety!" said he, pushing back the canvas bag of gold held out to him, "you shall not go over the world, and feel that the orphan you fed and fostered left you to starve with your money in his pocket. When you again assure me that you have committed no crime, you again remind me that gratitude has no right to be severe upon the shifts and errors of its benefactor. If you do not conform to society, what has society done for me? No! I will not forsake you in a reverse. Fortune has given you a fall. What, then! courage, and at her again!"

These last words were said so heartily and cheerfully as Morton sprang from the bed, that they inspirited Gawtreys, who had really desponded of his lot.

"Well," said he, "I cannot reject the only friend left me; and while I live — But I will make no professions. Quick, then, our luggage is already gone, and I hear Birnie grunting the rogue's march of retreat."

Morton's toilet was soon completed, and the three associates bade adieu to the *bureau*.

Birnie, who was taciturn and impenetrable as ever, walked a little before as guide. They arrived at length at a *serrurier's* shop, placed in an alley near the Porte St. Denis. The *serrurier* himself, a tall, begrimed, black-bearded man, was taking the shutters from his shop as they approached. He and Birnie exchanged silent nods; and the former, leaving his work, conducted them up a very filthy flight of stairs to an attic, where a bed, two stools, one table, and an old walnut-tree bureau formed the sole articles of furniture. Gawtreys looked rather ruefully round the black, low, damp walls, and said in a crestfallen tone, —

"We were better off at the Temple of Hymen. But get us a bottle of wine, some eggs, and a frying-pan. By Jove, I am a capital hand at an omelet!"

The *serrurier* nodded again, grinned, and withdrew.

"Rest here," said Birnie, in his calm, passionless voice, that seemed to Morton, however, to assume an unwonted tone of command. "I will go and make the best bargain I can for our furniture, buy fresh clothes, and engage our places for Tours."

"For Tours?" repeated Morton.

"Yes, there are some English there; one can live wherever there are English," said Gawtreys.

"Hum!" grunted Birnie, dryly, and, buttoning up his coat, he walked slowly away.

About noon he returned with a bundle of clothes, which Gawtreys, who always regained his elasticity of spirit wherever there was fair play to his talents, examined with great attention, and many exclamations of "*Bon! c'est ça.*"

"I have done well with the Jew," said Birnie, drawing from his coat pocket two heavy bags. "One hundred and eighty napoleons. We shall commence with a good capital!"

"You are right, my friend," said Gawtreys.

The *serrurier* was then despatched to the best *restaurant* in the neighbourhood, and the three adventurers made a less Socratic dinner than might have been expected.

CHAPTER VI.

THEN out again he flies to wing his mazy round.

THOMSON: *Castle of Indolence*.

Again he gazed. "It is," said he, "the same;

There sits he upright in his seat secure,

As one whose conscience is correct and pure." — CRABBE.

THE adventurers arrived at Tours, and established themselves there in a lodging, without any incident worth narrating by the way.

At Tours Morton had nothing to do but take his pleasure and enjoy himself. He passed for a young heir; Gawtreys for his tutor, — a doctor in divinity; Birnie for his valet. The task of maintenance fell on Gawtreys, who hit off his character to a hair; larded his grave jokes with University scraps of Latin; looked big and well-fed; wore knee-breeches and a shovel hat; and played whist with the skill of a veteran vicar. By his science in that game he made, at first, enough at least to defray their weekly expenses. But by degrees, the good people at Tours, who, under pretence of health, were there for economy, grew shy of so excellent a player; and though Gawtreys always swore solemnly that he played with the most scrupulous honour (an asseveration which Morton, at least, implicitly believed), and no proof to the contrary was ever detected, yet a first-rate card-player is always a suspi-

cious character, unless the losing parties know exactly who he is. The market fell off, and Gawtrety at length thought it prudent to extend their travels.

"Ah!" said Mr. Gawtrety, "the world nowadays has grown so ostentatious that one cannot travel advantageously without a post-chariot and four horses." At length they found themselves at Milan, which at that time was one of the *El Dorados* for gamesters. Here, however, for want of introductions, Mr. Gawtrety found it difficult to get into society. The nobles, proud and rich, played high, but were circumspect in their company; the *bourgeoisie*, industrious and energetic, preserved much of the old Lombard shrewdness; there were no *tables d'hôte* and public reunions. Gawtrety saw his little capital daily diminishing, with the Alps at the rear and Poverty in the van. At length, always on the *qui vive*, he contrived to make acquaintance with a Scotch family of great respectability. He effected this by picking up a snuff-box which the Scotchman had dropped in taking out his handkerchief. This politeness paved the way to a conversation in which Gawtrety made himself so agreeable, and talked with such zest of the Modern Athens, and the tricks practised upon travellers, that he was presented to Mrs. Macgregor. Cards were interchanged; and, as Mr. Gawtrety lived in tolerable style, the Macgregors pronounced him "a vara genteel mon." Once in the house of a respectable person, Gawtrety contrived to turn himself round and round, till he burrowed a hole into the English circle then settled in Milan. His whist-playing came into requisition, and once more Fortune smiled upon Skill.

To this house the pupil one evening accompanied the tutor. When the whist party, consisting of two tables, was formed, the young man found himself left out with an old gentleman, who seemed loquacious and good-natured, and who put many questions to Morton, which he found it difficult to answer. One of the whist tables was now in a state of revolution, namely, a lady had cut out and a gentleman cut in, when the door opened, and Lord Lilburne was announced.

Mr. Macgregor, rising, advanced with great respect to this personage.

"I scarcely ventured to hope you would coom, Lord Lilburne, the night is so cold."

"You did not allow sufficiently, then, for the dulness of my solitary inn and the attractions of your circle. Aha! whist, I see."

"You play sometimes?"

"Very seldom, now; I have sown all my wild oats, and even the ace of spades can scarcely dig them out again."

"Ha! ha! vara gude."

"I will look on;" and Lord Lilburne drew his chair to the table, exactly opposite to Mr. Gawtreys.

The old gentleman turned to Philip.

"An extraordinary man, Lord Lilburne; you have heard of him, of course?"

"No, indeed; what of him?" asked the young man, rousing himself.

"What of him?" said the old gentleman, with a smile; "why, the newspapers, if you ever read them, will tell you enough of the elegant, the witty Lord Lilburne; a man of eminent talent, though indolent. He was wild in his youth, as clever men often are; but on attaining his title and fortune, and marrying into the family of the then premier, he became more sedate. They say he might make a great figure in politics if he would. He has a very high reputation, — very. People do say that he is still fond of pleasure; but that is a common failing amongst the aristocracy. Morality is only found in the middle classes, young gentleman. It is a lucky family, that of Lilburne; his sister, Mrs. Beaufort —"

"Beaufort!" exclaimed Morton, and then muttered to himself, "Ah, true, true; I have heard the name of Lilburne before."

"Do you know the Beauforts? Well, you remember how luckily Robert, Lilburne's brother-in-law, came into that fine property just as his predecessor was about to marry a —"

Morton scowled at his garrulous acquaintance, and stalked abruptly to the card table.

Ever since Lord Lilburne had seated himself opposite to Mr. Gawtreys, that gentleman had evinced a perturbation of

manner that became obvious to the company. He grew deadly pale, his hands trembled, he moved uneasily in his seat, he missed deal, he trumped his partner's best diamond, finally he revoked, threw down his money, and said, with a forced smile, that the heat of the room overcame him. As he rose Lord Lilburne rose also, and the eyes of both met. Those of Lilburne were calm, but penetrating and inquisitive in their gaze; those of Gawtreys were like balls of fire. He seemed gradually to dilate in his height, his broad chest expanded, he breathed hard.

"Ah, Doctor," said Mr. Macgregor, "let me introduce you to Lord Lilburne."

The peer bowed haughtily; Mr. Gawtreys did not return the salutation, but with a sort of gulp, as if he were swallowing some burst of passion, strode to the fire, and then, turning round, again fixed his gaze upon the new guest. Lilburne, however, who had never lost his self-composure at this strange rudeness, was now quietly talking with their host.

"Your doctor seems an eccentric man; a little absent, — learned, I suppose. Have you been to Como yet?"

Mr. Gawtreys remained by the fire beating the devils tattoo upon the chimney-piece, and ever and anon turning his glance towards Lilburne, who seemed to have forgotten his existence.

Both these guests stayed till the party broke up, Mr. Gawtreys apparently wishing to outstay Lord Lilburne; for, when the last went downstairs, Mr. Gawtreys, nodding to his comrade, and giving a hurried bow to the host, descended also. As they passed the porters lodge, they found Lilburne on the step of his carriage; he turned his head abruptly, and again met Mr. Gawtreys's eye; paused a moment, and whispered over his shoulder, —

"So we remember each other, sir? Let us not meet again; and on that condition, bygones are bygones."

"Scoundrel!" muttered Gawtreys, clenching his fists; but the peer had sprung into his carriage with a lightness scarcely to be expected from his lameness, and the wheels whirled within an inch of the *soi-disant* doctors right pump.

Gawtreys walked on for some moments in great excitement. At length he turned to his companion.

"Do you guess who Lord Lilburne is? I will tell you, — my first foe and Fanny's grandfather! Now, note the justice of Fate: here is this man — mark well, — this man who commenced life by putting his faults on my own shoulders! From that little boss has fungussed out a terrible hump. This man who seduced my affianced bride, and then left her whole soul, once fair and blooming — I swear it — with its leaves fresh from the dews of heaven, one rank leprosy, — this man who, rolling in riches, learned to cheat and pilfer as a boy learns to dance and play the fiddle and (to damn me, whose happiness he had blasted) accused me to the world of his own crime; here is this man who has not left off one vice, but added to those of his youth the bloodless craft of the veteran knave; here is this man, flattered, courted, great, marching through lanes of bowing parasites to an illustrious epitaph and a marble tomb, and I, a rogue too, if you will, but rogue for my bread, dating from him my errors and my ruin! I, vagabond, outcast, skulking through tricks to avoid crime — why the difference? Because one is born rich and the other poor; because *he* has no excuse for crime, and therefore no one suspects him!"

The wretched man (for at that moment he was wretched) paused breathless from his passionate and rapid burst, and before him rose in its marble majesty, with the moon full upon its shining spires — the wonder of Gothic Italy — the Cathedral Church of Milan.

"Chafe not yourself at the universal fate," said the young man, with a bitter smile on his lips and pointing to the cathedral. "I have not lived long, but I have learned already enough to know this, — he who could raise a pile like that, dedicated to Heaven, would be honoured as a saint; he who knelt to God by the roadside under a hedge would be sent to the house of correction as a vagabond! The difference between man and man is money, and will be, when you, the despised charlatan, and Lilburne, the honoured cheat, have not left as much dust behind you as will fill a snuff-box. Comfort yourself, you are in the majority."

CHAPTER VII.

A DESERT wild

Before them stretched bare, comfortless, and vast,
With gibbets, bones, and carcasses defiled.

THOMSON: *Castle of Indolence.*

MR. GAWTREY did not wish to give his foe the triumph of thinking he had driven him from Milan; he resolved to stay and brave it out; but when he appeared in public, he found the acquaintances he had formed bow politely, but cross to the other side of the way. No more invitations to tea and cards showered in upon the jolly parson. He was puzzled, for people, while they shunned him, did not appear uncivil. He found out at last that a report was circulated that he was deranged. Though he could not trace this rumour to Lord Lilburne, he was at no loss to guess from whom it had emanated. His own eccentricities, especially his recent manner at Mr. Macgregor's, gave confirmation to the charge. Again the funds began to sink low in the canvas bags, and, at length, in despair, Mr. Gawtreay was obliged to quit the field. They returned to France through Switzerland, — a country too poor for gamesters; and ever since the interview with Lilburne, a great change had come over Gawtreay's gay spirit. He grew moody and thoughtful, he took no pains to replenish the common stock, he talked much and seriously to his young friend of poor Fanny, and owned that he yearned to see her again. The desire to return to Paris haunted him like a fatality. He saw the danger that awaited him there, but it only allured him the more, as the candle does the moth whose wings it has singed. Birnie, who, in all their vicissitudes and wanderings, their ups and downs, retained the same tacit, immovable demeanour, received with a sneer the orders at last to march back upon the French capital. "You would never have left it, if you had taken my advice," he said, and quitted the room.

Mr. Gawtrety gazed after him and muttered, "Is the die then cast?"

"What does he mean?" said Morton.

"You will know soon," replied Gawtrety, and he followed Birnie; and from that time the whispered conferences with that person, which had seemed suspended during their travels, were renewed.

One morning, three men were seen entering Paris on foot through the Porte St. Denis. It was a fine day in spring, and the old city looked gay with its loitering passengers and gaudy shops, and under that clear blue exhilarating sky so peculiar to France.

Two of these men walked abreast, the other preceded them a few steps. The one who went first—thin, pale, and thread-bare—yet seemed to suffer the least from fatigue; he walked with a long, swinging, noiseless stride, looking to the right and left from the corners of his eyes. Of the two who followed, one was handsome and finely formed, but of swarthy complexion, young, yet with a look of care; the other of sturdy frame, leaned on a thick stick, and his eyes were gloomily cast down.

"Philip," said the last, "in coming back to Paris, I feel that I am coming back to my grave!"

"Pooh! you were equally despondent in our excursions elsewhere."

"Because I was always thinking of poor Fanny, and because—because—Birnie was ever at me with his horrible temptations!"

"Birnie! I loathe the man! Will you never get rid of him?"

"I cannot! Hush! he will hear us! How unlucky we have been! and now without a *sou* in our pockets, —here the dunghill, there the jail! *We are in his power at last!*"

"His power! what mean you?"

"What ho! Birnie!" cried Gawtrety, unheeding Morton's question. "Let us halt and breakfast; I am tired."

"You forget! we have no money till we make it!" returned Birnie, coldly. "Come to the *surrurier's*, — he will trust us!"

CHAPTER VIII.

GAUNT Beggary and Scorn, with many hell-hounds more.

THOMSON: *Castle of Indolence*.

The other was a fell, spiteful fiend. — *Ibid*.

Your happiness behold! then straight a wand
He waved, an anti-magic power that hath
Truth from illusive falsehood to command. — *Ibid*.

But what for us, the children of despair,
Brought to the brink of hell, — what hope remains?
RESOLVE, RESOLVE. — *Ibid*.

It may be observed that there are certain years in which in a civilized country some particular crime comes into vogue. It flares its season, and then burns out. Thus at one time we have Burking, at another, Swingism; now, suicide is in vogue, now, poisoning tradespeople in apple-dumplings, now, little boys stab each other with penknives, now, common solders shoot at their sergeants. Almost every year there is one crime peculiar to it,—a sort of annual which overruns the country, but does not bloom again. Unquestionably the Press has a great deal to do with these epidemics. Let a newspaper once give an account of some out-of-the-way atrocity that has the charm of being novel, and certain depraved minds fasten to it like leeches. They brood over and revolve it; the idea grows up, a horrid phantasmalian monomania;¹ and all of a sudden, in a hundred different places, the one

¹ An old Spanish writer, treating of the Inquisition, has some very striking remarks on the kind of madness which, whenever some terrible notoriety is given to a particular offence, leads persons of distempered fancy to accuse themselves of it. He observes that when the cruelties of the Inquisition against the imaginary crime of sorcery were the most barbarous, this singular frenzy led numbers to accuse themselves of sorcery. The publication and celebrity of the crime begat the desire of the crime.

seed sown by the leaden types springs up into foul flowering. But if the first reported aboriginal crime has been attended with impunity, how much more does the imitative faculty cling to it. Ill-judged mercy falls, not like dew, but like a great heap of manure, on the rank deed.

Now it happened that at the time I write of, or rather a little before, there had been detected and tried in Paris a most redoubted coiner. He had carried on the business with a dexterity that won admiration even for the offence; and, moreover, he had served previously with some distinction at Austerlitz and Marengo. The consequence was that the public went with instead of against him, and his sentence was transmuted to three years' imprisonment by the government,—for all governments in free countries aspire rather to be popular than just.

No sooner was this case reported in the journals—and even the gravest took notice of it (which is not common with the scholastic journals of France),—no sooner did it make a stir and a sensation, and cover the criminal with celebrity, than the result became noticeable in a very large issue of false money.

Coining in the year I now write of was *the* fashionable crime. The police were roused into full vigour; it became known to them that there was one gang in especial who cultivated this art with singular success. Their coinage was, indeed, so good, so superior to all their rivals, that it was often unconsciously preferred by the public to the real mintage. At the same time they carried on their calling with such secrecy that they utterly baffled discovery.

An immense reward was offered by the *bureau* to any one who would betray his accomplices, and M. Favart was placed at the head of a commission of inquiry. This person had himself been a *faux monnoyer*, and was an adept in the art, and it was he who had discovered the redoubted coiner who had brought the crime into such notoriety. M. Favart was a man of the most vigilant acuteness, the most indefatigable research, and of a courage which, perhaps, is more common than we suppose. It is a popular error to suppose that cour-

age means courage in everything. Put a hero on board ship at a five-barred gate, and, if he is not used to hunting, he will turn pale; put a fox-hunter on one of the Swiss chasms, over which the mountaineer springs like a roe, and his knees will knock under him. People are brave in the dangers to which they accustom themselves, either in imagination or practice.

M. Favart, then, was a man of the most daring bravery in facing rogues and cut-throats. He awed them with his very eye; yet he had been known to have been kicked downstairs by his wife, and when he was drawn into the grand army, he deserted the eve of his first battle. Such, as moralists say, is the inconsistency of man!

But M. Favart was sworn to trace the coiners, and he had never failed yet in any enterprise he undertook. One day he presented himself to his chief with a countenance so elated that that penetrating functionary said to him at once,—

“You have heard of our messieurs!”

“I have; I am to visit them to-night.”

“Bravo! How many men will you take?”

“From twelve to twenty to leave without on guard; but I must enter alone. Such is the condition; an accomplice who fears his own throat too much to be openly a betrayer will introduce me to the house,—nay, to the very room. By his description it is necessary I should know the exact locale in order to cut off retreat; so to-morrow night I shall surround the beehive and take the honey.”

“They are desperate fellows, these coiners, always; better be cautious.”

“You forget I was one of them, and know the masonry.”

About the same time this conversation was going on at the *bureau* of the police, in another part of the town Morton and Gawtre were seated alone. It is some weeks since they entered Paris, and spring has mellowed into summer. The house in which they lodged was in the lordly *quartier* of the Faubourg St. Germain; the neighbouring streets were venerable with the ancient edifices of a fallen *noblesse*; but their tenement was in a narrow, dingy lane, and the building itself

seemed beggarly and ruinous. The apartment was in an attic on the sixth story, and the window, placed at the back of the lane, looked upon another row of houses of a better description, that communicated with one of the great streets of the *quartier*. The space between their abode and their opposite neighbours was so narrow that the sun could scarcely pierce between. In the height of summer might be found there a perpetual shade.

The pair were seated by the window. Gawtreys, well-dressed, smooth-shaven, as in his palmy time; Morton, in the same garments with which he had entered Paris, weather-stained and ragged. Looking towards the casements of the attic in the opposite house, Gawtreys said mutteringly, "I wonder where Birnie has been, and why he has not returned. I grow suspicious of that man."

"Suspicious of what?" asked Morton. "Of his honesty? Would he rob you?"

"Rob me! Humph, perhaps! But you see I am in Paris, in spite of the hints of the police; he may denounce me."

"Why, then, suffer him to lodge away from you?"

"Why? because by having separate houses there are two channels of escape. A dark night, and a ladder thrown across from window to window, he is with us, or we with him."

"But wherefore such precautions? You blind, you deceive me; what have you done? what is your employment now? You are mute. Hark you, Gawtreys. I have pinned my fate to you, I am fallen from hope itself! At times it almost makes me mad to look back, and yet you do not trust me. Since your return to Paris you are absent whole nights, often days; you are moody and thoughtful; yet, whatever your business, it seems to bring you ample returns."

"You think *that*," said Gawtreys, mildly, and with a sort of pity in his voice; "yet you refuse to take even the money to change those rags."

"Because I know not how the money was gained. Ah, Gawtreys, I am not too proud for charity, but I am for —"

He checked the word uppermost in his thoughts, and resumed, —

"Yes; your occupations seem lucrative. It was but yesterday Birnie gave me fifty napoleons, for which he said you wished change in silver."

"Did he? The ras — Well! and you got change for them?"

"I know not why, but I refused."

"That was right, Philip. Do nothing that man tells you."

"Will you, then, trust me? You are engaged in some horrible traffic! it may be blood! I am no longer a boy,—I have a will of my own, I will not be silently and blindly entrapped to perdition. If I march thither, it shall be with my own consent. Trust me, and this day, or we part to-morrow."

"Be ruled. Some secrets it is better not to know."

"It matters not. I have come to my decision,—I ask yours."

Gawtreys paused for some moments in deep thought. At last he lifted his eyes to Philip, and replied,—

"Well, then, if it must be. Sooner or later it must have been so; and I want a confidant. You are bold, and will not shrink. You desire to know my occupation,—will you witness it to-night?"

"I am prepared; to-night!"

Here a step was heard on the stairs, a knock at the door, and Birnie entered.

He drew aside Gawtreys, and whispered him, as usual, for some moments.

Gawtreys nodded his head, and then said aloud,—

"To-morrow we shall talk without reserve before my young friend. To-night he joins us."

"To-night! very well!" said Birnie, with his cold sneer.

"He must take the oath; and you, with your life, will be responsible for his honesty?"

"Ay! it is the rule."

"Good-by, then, till we meet," said Birnie, and withdrew.

"I wonder," said Gawtreys, musingly, and between his grinded teeth, "whether I shall ever have a good fair shot at that fellow? Ho, ho!" and his laugh shook the walls.

Morton looked hard at Gawtreys, as the latter now sank

down in his chair, and gazed with a vacant stare, that seemed almost to partake of imbecility, upon the opposite wall. The careless, reckless, jovial expression, which usually characterized the features of the man, had for some weeks given place to a restless, anxious, and at times ferocious aspect, like the beast that first finds a sport while the hounds are yet afar, and his limbs are yet strong, in the chase which marks him for his victim, but grows desperate with rage and fear as the day nears its close, and the death-dogs pant hard upon his track. But at that moment the strong features, with their gnarled muscles and iron sinews, seemed to have lost every sign both of passion and the will, and to be locked in a stolid and dull repose. At last he looked up at Morton, and said, with a smile like that of an old man in his dotage, —

“I’m thinking that my life has been one mistake! I had talents; you would not fancy it, but once I was neither a fool nor a villain! Odd, isn’t it? Just reach me the brandy.”

But Morton, with a slight shudder, turned and left the room.

He walked on mechanically, and gained, at last, the superb *Quai* that borders the Seine. There, the passengers became more frequent; gay equipages rolled along; the white and lofty mansions looked fair and stately in the clear blue sky of early summer; beside him flowed the sparkling river, animated with the painted baths that floated on its surface. Earth was merry and heaven serene; his heart was dark through all. Night within, Morning beautiful without! At last he paused by that bridge, stately with the statues of those whom the caprice of time honours with a name; for though Zeus and his gods be overthrown, while earth exists will live the worship of Dead Men,—the bridge by which you pass from the royal Tuileries or the luxurious streets beyond the Rue de Rivoli to the Senate of the emancipated People, and the gloomy and desolate grandeur of the Faubourg St. Germain, in whose venerable haunts the impoverished descendants of the old feudal tyrants, whom the birth of the Senate overthrew, yet congregate,—the ghosts of departed powers proud of the shadows of great names. As the

English outcast paused midway on the bridge, and for the first time lifting his head from his bosom, gazed around, there broke at once on his remembrance that terrible and fatal evening, when, hopeless, friendless, desperate, he had begged for charity of his uncle's hireling, with all the feelings that then (so imperfectly and lightly touched on in his brief narrative to Gawtreys) had raged and blackened in his breast urging to the resolution he had adopted, casting him on the ominous friendship of the man whose guidance he even then had suspected and distrusted. The spot in either city had a certain similitude and correspondence each with each: at the first he had consummated his despair of human destinies, he had dared to forget the Providence of God, he had arrogated his fate to himself, by the first bridge he had taken his resolve; by the last he stood in awe at the result! — stood no less poor, no less abject, equally in rags and squalor; but was his crest as haughty and his eye as fearless, for was his conscience as free and his honour as unstained? Those arches of stone, those rivers that rolled between, seemed to him then to take a more mystic and typical sense than belongs to the outer world,—they were the bridges to the Rivers of his Life. Plunged in thoughts so confused and dim that he could scarcely distinguish, through the chaos, the one streak of light which, perhaps, heralded the reconstruction or regeneration of the elements of his soul, two passengers halted, also by his side.

"You will be late for the debate," said one of them to the other. "Why do you stop?"

"My friend," said the other, "I never pass this spot without recalling the time when I stood here without a *sou*, or, as I thought, a chance of one, and impiously meditated self-destruction."

"*You!* now so rich, so fortunate in repute and station,—is it possible? How was it? A lucky chance, a sudden legacy?"

"No; Time, Faith, and Energy,—the three Friends God has given to the Poor!"

The men moved on; but Morton, who had turned his face

towards them, fancied that the last speaker fixed on him his bright, cheerful eye, with a meaning look; and when the man was gone, he repeated those words, and hailed them in his heart of hearts as an augury from above.

Quickly, then, and as if by magic, the former confusion of his mind seemed to settle into distinct shapes of courage and resolve. "Yes," he muttered; "I will keep this night's appointment, I will learn the secret of these men's life. In my inexperience and destitution, I have suffered myself to be led hitherto into a partnership, if not with vice and crime, at least with subterfuge and trick. I awake from my reckless boyhood, my unworthy palterings with my better self. If Gawtrey be as I dread to find him, if he be linked in some guilty and hateful traffic with that loathsome accomplice, I will—" He paused, for his heart whispered, "Well, and even so,—the guilty man clothed and fed *thee*!" "I will," resumed his thought, in answer to his heart,— "I will go on my knees to him to fly while there is yet time, to work, beg, starve, perish even, rather than lose the right to look man in the face without a blush, and kneel to his God without remorse!"

And as he thus ended, he felt suddenly as if he himself were restored to the perception and the joy of the Nature and the World around him; the NIGHT had vanished from his soul, he inhaled the balm and freshness of the air, he comprehended the delight which the liberal June was scattering over the earth, he looked above, and his eyes were suffused with pleasure, at the smile of the soft blue skies. The MORNING became, as it were, a part of his own being; and he felt that as the world in spite of the storms is fair, so in spite of evil God is good. He walked on, he passed the bridge; but his step was no more the same; he forgot his rags. Why should he be ashamed? And thus, in the very flush of this new and strange elation and elasticity of spirit, he came un-awares upon a group of young men, lounging before the porch of one of the chief hotels in that splendid Rue de Rivoli, wherein Wealth and the English have made their homes. A groom, mounted, was leading another horse up and down

the road, and the young men were making their comments of approbation upon both the horses, especially the one led, which was, indeed, of uncommon beauty and great value. Even Morton, in whom the boyish passion of his earlier life yet existed, paused to turn his experienced and admiring eye upon the stately shape and pace of the noble animal, and as he did so, a name too well remembered came upon his ear.

"Certainly, Arthur Beaufort is the most enviable fellow in Europe!"

"Why, yes," said another of the young men; "he has plenty of money, is good-looking, devilish good-natured, clever, and spends like a prince."

"Has the best horses!"

"The best luck at *roulette*!"

"The prettiest girls in love with him!"

"And no one enjoys life more. Ah, here he is!"

The group parted as a light, graceful figure came out of a jeweller's shop that adjoined the hotel, and halted gayly amongst the loungers. Morton's first impulse was to hurry from the spot; his second impulse arrested his step, and, a little apart, and half-hid beneath one of the arches of the colonnade which adorns the street, the Outcast gazed upon the Heir. There was no comparison in the natural personal advantages of the two young men; for Philip Morton, despite all the hardships of his rough career, had now grown up and ripened into a rare perfection of form and feature. His broad chest, his erect air, his lithe and symmetrical length of limb, united, happily, the attributes of activity and strength; and though there was no delicacy of youthful bloom upon his dark cheek, and though lines which should have come later marred its smoothness with the signs of care and thought, yet an expression of intelligence and daring, equally beyond his years, and the evidence of hardy, abstemious, vigorous health, served to show to the full advantage the outline of features which, noble and regular, though stern and masculine, the artist might have borrowed for his ideal of a young Spartan arming for his first battle. Arthur, slight to feebleness, and with the paleness, partly of constitution, partly of gay excess, on his

fair and clear complexion, had features far less symmetrical and impressive than his cousin: but what then? All that are bestowed by elegance of dress, the refinements of luxurious habit, the nameless grace that comes from a mind and a manner polished,—the one by literary culture, the other by social intercourse,—invested the person of the heir with a fascination that rude Nature alone ever fails to give. And about him there was a gayety, an airiness of spirit, an atmosphere of enjoyment, which bespoke one who is in love with life.

"Why, this is lucky! I'm so glad to see you all!" said Arthur Beaufort, with that silver-ringing tone, and charming smile, which are to the happy spring of man what its music and its sunshine are to the spring of earth. "You must dine with me at Verey's. I want something to rouse me to-day; for I did not get home from the *Salon*¹ till four this morning."

"But you won?"

"Yes, Marsden. Hang it! I always win,—I who could so well afford to lose; I'm quite ashamed of my luck!"

"It is easy to spend what one wins," observed Mr. Marsden, sententiously; "and I see you have been at the jeweller's! A present for Cécile? Well, don't blush, my dear fellow. What is life without women?"

"And wine?" said a second.

"And play?" said a third.

"And wealth?" said a fourth.

"And *you* enjoy them all! Happy fellow!" said a fifth.

The Outcast pulled his hat over his brows, and walked away.

"This dear Paris!" said Beaufort, as his eye carelessly and unconsciously followed the dark form retreating through the arches,— "this dear Paris! I must make the most of it while I stay! I have only been here a few weeks, and next week I must go."

"Pooh! your health is better: you don't look like the same man."

¹ The most celebrated gaming-house in Paris in the day before gaming-houses were suppressed by the well-directed energy of the government.

"You think so really? Still I don't know; the doctors say that I must either go to the German waters,—the season is begun,—or —"

"Or what?"

"Live less with such pleasant companions, my dear fellow! But as you say, what is life without —"

"Women!"

"Wine!"

"Play!"

"Wealth!"

"Ha, ha! 'Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it!'"

And Arthur leaped lightly on his saddle, and as he rode gayly on, humming the favourite air of the last opera, the hoofs of his horse splashed the mud over a foot-passenger halting at the crossing. Morton checked the fiery exclamation rising to his lips; and gazing after the brilliant form that hurried on towards the Champs Elysées, his eye caught the statues on the bridge, and a voice as of a cheering angel whispered again to his heart, "TIME, FAITH, ENERGY!"

The expression of his countenance grew calm at once; and as he continued his rambles it was with a mind that, casting off the burdens of the past, looked serenely and steadily on the obstacles and hardships of the future. We have seen that a scruple of conscience or of pride, not without its nobleness, had made him refuse the importunities of Gawtreys for less sordid raiment; the same feeling made it his custom to avoid sharing the luxurious and dainty food with which Gawtreys was wont to regale himself. For that strange man, whose wonderful felicity of temperament and constitution rendered him, in all circumstances, keenly alive to the hearty and animal enjoyments of life, would still emerge, as the day declined, from their wretched apartment, and, trusting to his disguises, in which indeed he possessed a masterly art, repair to one of the better description of *restaurants*, and feast away his cares for the moment. William Gawtreys would not have cared three straws for the curse of Damocles. The sword over *his* head would never have spoiled his appetite! He had lately, too, taken to drinking much more deeply than

he had been used to do; the fine intellect of the man was growing thickened and dulled, and this was a spectacle that Morton could not bear to contemplate. Yet so great was Gawtreys's vigour of health, that, after draining wine and spirits enough to have despatched a company of fox-hunters, and after betraying, sometimes in uproarious glee, sometimes in maudlin self-bewailings, that he himself was not quite invulnerable to the thyrsus of the god, he would — on any call on his energies, or especially before departing on those mysterious expeditions which kept him from home half, and sometimes all, the night — plunge his head into cold water, drink as much of the lymph as a groom would have shuddered to bestow on a horse, close his eyes in a doze for half an hour, and wake, cool, sober, and collected, as if he had lived according to the precepts of Socrates or Cornaro!

But to return to Morton. It was his habit to avoid as much as possible sharing the good cheer of his companion; and now, as he entered the Champs Elysées, he saw a little family, consisting of a young mechanic, his wife, and two children, who, with that love of harmless recreation which yet characterizes the French, had taken advantage of a holiday in the craft, and were enjoying their simple meal under the shadow of the trees. Whether in hunger or in envy, Morton paused and contemplated the happy group. Along the road rolled the equipages and trampled the steeds of those to whom all life is a holiday. *There*, was Pleasure, under those trees was Happiness. One of the children, a little boy of about six years old, observing the attitude and gaze of the pausing wayfarer, ran to him, and holding up a fragment of a coarse kind of cake, said to him, willingly, "Take it; I have had enough!" The child reminded Morton of his brother; his heart melted within him, he lifted the young Samaritan in his arms, and as he kissed him, wept.

The mother observed and rose also. She laid her hand on his own. "Poor boy! why do you weep? Can we relieve you?"

Now that bright gleam of human nature, suddenly darting across the sombre recollections and associations of his past

life, seemed to Morton as if it came from Heaven, in approval and in blessing of this attempt at reconciliation to his fate.

"I thank you," said he, placing the child on the ground, and passing his hand over his eyes,— "I thank you, yes! Let me sit down amongst you." And he sat down, the child by his side, and partook of their fare, and was merry with them,— the proud Philip! — had he not begun to discover the "precious jewel" in the "ugly and venomous" Adversity?

The mechanic, though a gay fellow on the whole, was not without some of that discontent of his station which is common with his class; he vented it, however, not in murmurs, but in jests. He was satirical on the carriages and the horse-men that passed; and lolling on the grass, ridiculed his betters at his ease.

"Hush!" said his wife, suddenly; "here comes Madame de Merville;" and rising as she spoke, she made a respectful inclination of her head towards an open carriage that was passing very slowly towards the town.

"Madame de Merville," repeated the husband, rising also, and lifting his cap from his head. "Ah! I have nothing to say against *her*!"

Morton looked instinctively towards the carriage, and saw a fair countenance turned graciously to answer the silent salutations of the mechanic and his wife,— a countenance that had long haunted his dreams, though of late it had faded away beneath harsher thoughts, the countenance of the stranger whom he had seen at the *bureau* of Gawtrey, when that worthy personage had borne a more mellifluous name. He started and changed colour. The lady herself now seemed suddenly to recognize him; for their eyes met, and she bent forward eagerly. She pulled the check-string; the carriage halted; she beckoned to the mechanic's wife, who went up to the road-side.

"I worked once for that lady," said the man with a tone of feeling; "and when my wife fell ill last winter she paid the doctors. Ah, she is an angel of charity and kindness!"

Morton scarcely heard this eulogium, for he observed, by

something eager and inquisitive in the face of Madame de Merville, and by the sudden manner in which the mechanic's helpmate turned her head to the spot in which he stood, that he was the object of their conversation. Once more he became suddenly aware of his ragged dress, and with a natural shame—a fear that charity might be extended to him from *her*—he muttered an abrupt farewell to the operative, and without another glance at the carriage, walked away.

Before he had got many paces, the wife however came up to him, breathless. "Madame de Merville would speak to you, sir!" she said, with more respect than she had hitherto thrown into her manner. Philip paused an instant, and again strode on.

"It must be some mistake," he said, hurriedly; "I have no right to expect such an honour."

He struck across the road, gained the opposite side, and had vanished from Madame de Merville's eyes before the woman regained the carriage. But still that calm, pale, and somewhat melancholy face presented itself before him; and as he walked again through the town, sweet and gentle fancies crowded confusedly on his heart. On that soft summer day, memorable for so many silent but mighty events in that inner life which prepares the catastrophes of the outer one,—as in the region of which Virgil has sung the images of men to be born hereafter repose or glide,—on that soft summer day he felt he had reached the age when Youth begins to clothe in some human shape its first vague ideal of desire and love.

In such thoughts, and still wandering, the day wore away, till he found himself in one of the lanes that surround that glittering Microcosm of the vices, the frivolities, the hollow show, and the real beggary of the gay City,—the gardens and the galleries of the Palais Royal. Surprised at the lateness of the hour, it was then on the stroke of seven, he was about to return homewards, when the loud voice of Gawtreysounded behind, and that personage, tapping him on the back, said,—

"Hallo, my young friend, well met! This will be a night

of trial to you. Empty stomachs produce weak nerves. Come along! you must dine with me. A good dinner and a bottle of old wine—come! nonsense, I say you shall come! *Vive la joie!*”

While speaking, he had linked his arm in Morton's, and hurried him on several paces in spite of his struggles; but just as the words “*Vive la joie*” left his lips, he stood still and mute, as if a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet; and Morton felt that heavy arm shiver and tremble like a leaf. He looked up, and just at the entrance of that part of the Palais Royal in which are situated the *restaurants* of Verey and Vefour, he saw two men standing but a few paces before them, and gazing full on Gawtreys and himself.

“It is my evil genius,” muttered Gawtreys, grinding his teeth.

“And mine!” said Morton.

The younger of the two men thus apostrophized made a step towards Philip, when his companion drew him back and whispered, “What are you about,—do you know that young man?”

“He is my cousin; Philip Beaufort's natural son!”

“Is he? then discard him forever. He is with the most dangerous knave in Europe.”

As Lord Lilburne—for it was he—thus whispered his nephew, Gawtreys strode up to him, and glaring full in his face, said in a deep and hollow tone: “There *is* a hell, my lord,—I go to drink to our meeting!” Thus saying, he took off his hat with a ceremonious mockery, and disappeared within the adjoining *restaurant*, kept by Vefour.

“A *hell*,” said Lilburne, with his frigid smile, — “the rogue's head runs upon *gambling-houses!*”

“And I have suffered Philip again to escape me,” said Arthur, in self-reproach; for while Gawtreys had addressed Lord Lilburne, Morton had plunged back amidst the labyrinth of alleys. “How have I kept my oath?”

“Come! your guests must have arrived by this time. As for that wretched young man, depend upon it that he is corrupted body and soul.”

"But he is my own cousin."

"Pooh! there is no relationship in natural children; besides, he will find you out fast enough. Ragged claimants are not long too proud to beg."

"You speak in earnest?" said Arthur, irresolutely.

"Ay; trust my experience of the world. *Allons!*"

And in a *cabinet* of the very *restaurant* adjoining that in which the solitary Gawtreys gorged his conscience, Lilburne, Arthur, and their gay friends, soon forgetful of all but the roses of the moment, bathed their airy spirits in the dews of the mirthful wine. O extremes of life! O Night! O Morning!

CHAPTER IX.

MEANTIME a moving scene was open laid,
That lazar-house. — THOMSON: *Castle of Indolence*.

It was near midnight. At the mouth of the lane in which Gawtreys resided there stood four men. Not far distant, in the broad street at angles with the lane, were heard the wheels of carriages and the sound of music. A lady, fair in form, tender of heart, stainless in repute, was receiving her friends.

"Monsieur Favart," said one of the men to the smallest of the four, "you understand the conditions, — 20,000 francs and a free pardon?"

"Nothing more reasonable; it is understood. Still, I confess that I should like to have my men close at hand. I am not given to fear, but this is a dangerous experiment."

"You knew the danger beforehand and subscribed to it; you must enter alone with me, or not at all. Mark you, the men are sworn to murder him who betrays them. Not for twenty times 20,000 francs would I have them know me as the informer. My life were not worth a day's purchase.

Now, if you feel secure in your disguise, all is safe. You will have seen them at their work, you will recognize their persons, you can depose against them at the trial; I shall have time to quit France."

"Well, well! as you please."

"Mind, you must wait in the vault with them till they separate. We have so planted your men that whatever street each of the gang takes in going home, he can be seized quietly and at once. The bravest and craftiest of all, who, though he has but just joined, is already their captain, — *him*, the man I told you of, who lives in the house, you must take after his return, in his bed. It is the sixth story to the right, remember, — here is the key to his door. He is a giant in strength, and will never be taken alive if up and armed."

"Ah! I comprehend. Gilbert," and Favart turned to one of his companions who had not yet spoken, "take three men besides yourself, according to the directions I gave you, — the porter will admit you; that's arranged. Make no noise. If I don't return by four o'clock, don't wait for me, but proceed at once. Look well to your primings. Take him alive, if possible; at the worst, dead. And now, *mon ami*, lead on!"

The traitor nodded, and walked slowly down the street. Favart, pausing, whispered hastily to the man whom he had called Gilbert, —

"Follow me close, get to the door of the cellar, place eight men within hearing of my whistle; recollect the picklocks, the axes. If you hear the whistle, break in; if not, I'm safe, and the first orders to seize the captain in his room stand good."

So saying, Favart strode after his guide. The door of a large but ill-favoured-looking house stood ajar; they entered, passed unmolested through a courtyard, descended some stairs; the guide unlocked the door of a cellar and took a dark-lantern from under his cloak. As he drew up the slide, the dim light gleamed on barrels and wine-casks, which appeared to fill up the space. Rolling aside one of these, the guide lifted a trap-door and lowered his lantern. "Enter," said he; and the two men disappeared.

The coiners were at their work. A man seated on a stool before a desk was entering accounts in a large book (that man was William Gawtrety), while with the rapid precision of honest mechanics, the machinery of the Dark Trade went on in its several departments. Apart, alone, at the foot of a long table, sat Philip Morton. The truth had exceeded his darkest suspicions. He had consented to take the oath not to divulge what was to be given to his survey; and when, led into that vault, the bandage was taken from his eyes, it was some minutes before he could fully comprehend the desperate and criminal occupations of the wild forms amidst which towered the burly stature of his benefactor. As the truth slowly grew upon him he shrank from the side of Gawtrety; but deep compassion for his friend's degradation swallowing up the horror of the trade, he flung himself on one of the rude seats, and felt that the bond between them was indeed broken, and that the next morning he should be again alone in the world. Still, as the obscene jests, the fearful oaths, that from time to time rang through the vault, came on his ear, he cast his haughty eye in such disdain over the groups that Gawtrety, observing him, trembled for his safety, and nothing but Philip's sense of his own impotence, and the brave, not timorous, desire not to perish by such hands, kept silent the fiery denunciations of a nature still proud and honest, that quivered on his lips. All present were armed with pistols and cutlasses except Morton, who suffered the weapons presented to him to lie unheeded on the table.

"Courage, mes amis!" said Gawtrety, closing his book, — "courage! A few months more, and we shall have made enough to retire upon and enjoy ourselves for the rest of our days. Where is Birnie?"

"Did he not tell you?" said one of the artisans, looking up. "He has found out the cleverest hand in France, — the very fellow who helped Bouchard in all his five-franc pieces. He has promised to bring him to-night."

"Ay, I remember," returned Gawtrety; "he told me this morning, — he is a famous decoy!"

"I think so indeed!" quoth a coiner; "for he caught you,

the best head to our hands that ever *les industriels* were blessed with, *sacré fichtre!*"

"Flatterer!" said Gawtreys, coming from the desk to the table and pouring out wine from one of the bottles into a huge flagon. "To your healths!"

Here the door slid back, and Birnie glided in.

"Where is your booty, *mon brave?*" said Gawtreys. "We only coin money; you coin men, stamp with your own seal, and send them current to the devil!"

The coiners, who liked Birnie's ability (for the *ci-devant* engraver was of admirable skill in their craft) but who hated his joyless manners, laughed at this taunt, which Birnie did not seem to heed, except by a malignant gleam of his dead eye.

"If you mean the celebrated coiner, Jacques Giraumont, he waits without. You know our rules. I cannot admit him without leave."

"*Bon!* we give it, eh, Messieurs?" said Gawtreys.

"Ay, ay!" cried several voices. "He knows the oath, and will hear the penalty."

"Yes, he knows the oath," replied Birnie, and glided back.

In a moment more he returned with a small man in a mechanic's blouse. The new comer wore the republican beard and mustache, of a sandy gray; his hair was the same colour, and a black patch over one eye increased the ill-favoured appearance of his features.

"*Diable*, Monsieur Giraumont, but you are more like Vulcan than Adonis!" said Gawtreys.

"I don't know anything about Vulcan, but I know how to make five-franc pieces," said M. Giraumont, doggedly.

"Are you poor?"

"As a church mouse, — the only thing belonging to a church, since the Bourbons came back, that is poor!"

At this sally the coiners, who had gathered round the table, uttered the shout with which, in all circumstances, Frenchmen receive a *bon mot*.

"Humph!" said Gawtreys. "Who responds with his own life for your fidelity?"

"I," said Birnie.

"Administer the oath to him."

Suddenly four men advanced, seized the visitor, and bore him from the vault into another one within. After a few moments they returned.

"He has taken the oath and heard the penalty."

"Death to yourself, your wife, your son, and your grandson, if you betray us!"

"I have neither son nor grandson; as for my wife, Monsieur le Capitaine, you offer a bribe instead of a threat when you talk of *her* death!"

"*Sacré!* but you will be an addition to our circle, *mon brave!*" said Gawtrey, laughing; while again the grim circle shouted applause.

"But I suppose you care for your own life?"

"Otherwise I should have preferred starving to coming here," answered the laconic neophyte.

"I have done with you. Your health!"

On this the coiners gathered round M. Giraumont, shook him by the hand, and commenced many questions with a view to ascertain his skill.

"Show me your coinage first, — I see you use both the die and the furnace. Hem! this piece is not bad, — you have struck it from an iron die? Right, it makes the impression sharper than plaster of Paris. But you take the poorest and the most dangerous part of the trade in taking the home market. I can put you in a way to make ten times as much, and with safety. Look at this!" and M. Giraumont took a forged Spanish dollar from his pocket, so skilfully manufactured that the connoisseurs were lost in admiration. "You may pass thousands of these all over Europe, except France, and who is ever to detect you? But it will require better machinery than you have here."

Thus conversing, M. Giraumont did not perceive that Mr. Gawtrey had been examining him very curiously and minutely. But Birnie had noted their chief's attention, and once attempted to join his new ally, when Gawtrey laid his hand on his shoulder and stopped him.

"Do not speak to your friend till I bid you, or—" he stopped short, and touched his pistols.

Birnie grew a shade more pale, but replied, with his usual sneer, —

"Suspicious! Well, so much the better!" and seating himself carelessly at the table, lighted his pipe.

"And now, Monsieur Giraumont," said Gawtrety, as he took the head of the table, "come to my right hand. A half-holiday in your honour. Clear these infernal instruments, and more wine, *mes amis!*"

The party arranged themselves at the table. Among the desperate there is almost invariably a tendency to mirth. A solitary ruffian, indeed, is moody, but a gang of ruffians are jovial. The coiners talked and laughed loud. Mr. Birnie, from his dogged silence, seemed apart from the rest, though in the centre; for in a noisy circle a silent tongue builds a wall round its owner. But that respectable personage kept his furtive watch upon Giraumont and Gawtrety, who appeared talking together very amicably. The younger novice of that night, equally silent, seated towards the bottom of the table, was not less watchful than Birnie. An uneasy, undefinable foreboding had come over him since the entrance of M. Giraumont; this had been increased by the manner of Mr. Gawtrety. His faculty of observation, which was very acute, had detected something false in the chief's blandness to their guest, — something dangerous in the glittering eye that Gawtrety ever, as he spoke to Giraumont, bent on that person's lips as he listened to his reply; for whenever William Gawtrety suspected a man, he watched, not his eyes, but his lips.

Waked from his scornful revery, a strange spell chained Morton's attention to the chief and the guest, and he bent forward, with parted mouth and straining ear, to catch their conversation.

"It seems to me a little strange," said Mr. Gawtrety, raising his voice so as to be heard by the party, "that a coiner so dexterous as M. Giraumont should not be known to any of us except our friend Birnie."

"Not at all," replied Giraumont; "I worked only with

Bouchard and two others since sent to the galleys. We were but a small fraternity, — everything has its commencement."

"C'est juste; buvez, donc, cher ami!"¹

The wine circulated. Gawtrety began again, —

"You have had a bad accident, seemingly, Monsieur Giraumont. How did you lose your eye?"

"In a scuffle with the *gendarmes* the night Bouchard was taken and I escaped. Such misfortunes are on the cards."

"C'est juste; buvez, donc, Monsieur Giraumont!"²

Again there was a pause, and again Gawtrety's deep voice was heard.

"You wear a wig, I think, Monsieur Giraumont? To judge by your eyelashes, your own hair has been a handsomer colour."

"We seek disguise, not beauty, my host; and the police have sharp eyes."

"C'est juste; buvez, donc, — vieux renard!"³ When did we two meet last?"

"Never, that I know of."

"Ce n'est pas vrai! buvez, donc, MONSIEUR FAVART!"⁴

At the sound of that name the company started in dismay and confusion, and the police officer, forgetting himself for the moment, sprang from his seat and put his right hand into his blouse.

"Ho, there, treason!" cried Gawtrety, in a voice of thunder; and he caught the unhappy man by the throat.

It was the work of a moment. Morton, where he sat, beheld a struggle, he heard a death-cry. He saw the huge form of the master-coiner rising above all the rest as cutlasses gleamed and eyes sparkled round. He saw the quivering and powerless frame of the unhappy guest raised aloft in those mighty arms, and presently it was hurled along the table, — bottles crashing, the board shaking beneath its weight, — and lay before the very eyes of Morton, a distorted and lifeless mass.

¹ "That's right; drink, then, dear friend."

² "That's right; drink, then, Monsieur Giraumont."

³ "That's right; drink, then, old fox."

⁴ "That's not true; drink, then, Monsieur Favart."

At the same instant Gawtrey sprang upon the table, his black frown singling out from the group the ashen, cadaverous face of the shrinking traitor. Birnie had darted from the table; he was half way towards the sliding door; his face, turned over his shoulder, met the eyes of the chief.

"Devil!" shouted Gawtrey, in his terrible voice, which the echoes of the vault gave back from side to side, "did I not give thee up my soul, that thou mightest not compass my death? Hark ye! thus die my slavery and all our secrets!" The explosion of his pistol half swallowed up the last word, and with a single groan the traitor fell on the floor, pierced through the brain; then there was a dead and grim hush as the smoke rolled slowly along the roof of the dreary vault.

Morton sank back on his seat and covered his face with his hands. The last seal on the fate of THE MAN OF CRIME was set; the last wave in the terrible and mysterious tide of his destiny had dashed on his soul to the shore whence there is no return. Vain, now and henceforth, the humour, the sentiment, the kindly impulse, the social instincts which had invested that stalwart shape with dangerous fascination, which had implied the hope of ultimate repentance, of redemption even in this world. The HOUR and the CIRCUMSTANCE had seized their prey, and the self-defence, which a lawless career rendered a necessity, left the eternal die of blood upon his doom.

"Friends, I have saved you," said Gawtrey, slowly gazing on the corpse of his second victim while he returned the pistol to his belt. "I have not quailed before this man's eye," and he spurned the clay of the officer as he spoke, with a revengeful scorn, "without treasuring up its aspect in my heart of hearts. I knew him when he entered, knew him through his disguise; yet, faith, it was a clever one! Turn up his face and gaze on him now; he will never terrify us again, unless there be truth in ghosts!"

Murmuring and tremulous, the coiners scrambled on the table and examined the dead man. From this task Gawtrey interrupted them, for his quick eye detected, with the pistols under the policeman's blouse, a whistle of metal of curious

construction, and he conjectured at once that danger was yet at hand.

"I have saved you, I say, but only for the hour. This deed cannot sleep. See, he had help within call; the police knew where to look for their comrade. We are dispersed. Each for himself. Quick, divide the spoils! *Sauve qui peut!*"

Then Morton heard where he sat, his hands still clasped before his face, a confused hubbub of voices, the jingle of money, the scrambling of feet, the creaking of doors. All was silent.

A strong grasp drew his hands from his eyes.

"Your first scene of life against life," said Gawtreys voice, which seemed fearfully changed to the ear that heard it. "Bah! what would you think of a battle? Come to our eyrie; the carcasses are gone."

Morton looked fearfully round the vault. He and Gawtreys were alone. His eyes sought the places where the dead had lain, — they were removed; no vestige of the deeds, not even a drop of blood.

"Come, take up your cutlass, come!" repeated the voice of the chief, as with his dim lantern — now the sole light of the vault — he stood in the shadow of the doorway.

Morton rose, took up the weapon mechanically, and followed that terrible guide, mute and unconscious, as a Soul follows a Dream through the House of Sleep!

CHAPTER X.

SLEEP no more! — *Macbeth.*

AFTER winding through gloomy and labyrinthine passages which conducted to a different range of cellars from those entered by the unfortunate Favart, Gawtreys emerged at the foot of a flight of stairs, which, dark, narrow, and in many places broken, had been probably appropriated to servants of

the house in its days of palmier glory. By these steps the pair regained their attic. Gawtrety placed the lantern on the table and seated himself in silence. Morton, who had recovered his self-possession and formed his resolution, gazed on him for some moments, equally taciturn. At length he spoke.

"Gawtrety!"

"I bade you not call me by that name," said the coiner; for we need scarcely say that in his new trade he had assumed a new appellation.

"It is the least guilty one by which I have known you," returned Morton, firmly; "it is for the last time I call you by it! I demanded to see by what means one to whom I had intrusted my fate supported himself. I *have seen*," continued the young man, still firmly, but with a livid cheek and lip, "and the tie between us is rent forever. Interrupt me not; it is not for me to blame you. I have eaten of your bread and drunk of your cup. Confiding in you too blindly, and believing that you were at least free from those dark and terrible crimes for which there is no expiation,—at least in this life,—my conscience seared by distress, my very soul made dormant by despair, I surrendered myself to one leading a career equivocal, suspicious, dishonourable, perhaps, but still not, as I believed, of atrocity and bloodshed. I wake at the brink of the abyss; my mother's hand beckons to me from the grave; I think I hear her voice while I address you; I recede while it is yet time,—we part, and forever!"

Gawtrety, whose stormy passion was still deep upon his soul, had listened hitherto in sullen and dogged silence, with a gloomy frown on his knitted brow; he now rose with an oath.

"Part, that I may let loose on the world a new traitor! Part, when you have seen me fresh from an act that, once whispered, gives me to the guillotine! Part, never,—at least alive!"

"I have said it," said Morton, folding his arms calmly; "I say it to your face, though I might part from you in secret. Frown not on me, man of blood! I am fearless as yourself! In another minute I am gone."

"Ah! is it so?" said Gawtrety; and glancing round the room, which contained two doors,—the one concealed by the draperies of a bed, communicating with the stairs by which they had entered, the other with the landing of the principal and common flight,—he turned to the former, within his reach, which he locked and put the key into his pocket, and then, throwing across the latter a heavy swing bar, which fell into its socket with a harsh noise, before the threshold he placed his vast bulk and burst into his loud, fierce laugh,—"Ho! ho! slave and fool, once mine, you were mine body and soul forever!"

"Tempter, I defy you; stand back!" and, firm and dauntless, Morton laid his hand on the giant's vest.

Gawtrety seemed more astonished than enraged. He looked hard at his daring associate, on whose lip the down was yet scarcely dark.

"Boy," said he, "off! Do not rouse the devil in me again! I could crush you with a hug."

"My soul supports my body, and I am armed," said Morton, laying hand on his cutlass. "But you dare not harm me, nor I you; bloodstained as you are, you gave me shelter and bread. But accuse me not that I will save my soul while it is yet time! Shall my mother have blessed me in vain upon her death-bed?"

Gawtrety drew back, and Morton, by a sudden impulse, grasped his hand.

"Oh, hear me, hear me!" he cried, with great emotion. "Abandon this horrible career; you have been decoyed and betrayed to it by one who can deceive or terrify you no more! Abandon it, and I will never desert you. For her sake—for your Fanny's sake—pause, like me, before the gulf swallow us. Let us fly,—far to the New World; to any land where our thews and sinews, our stout hands and hearts, can find an honest mart! Men desperate as we are have yet risen by honest means. Take her, your orphan, with us. We will work for her, both of us. Gawtrety, hear me! It is not my voice that speaks to you, it is your good angel's!"

Gawtrety fell back against the wall, and his chest heaved.

"Morton," he said, with choked and tremulous accent, "go now; leave me to my fate! I have sinned against you,—shamefully sinned. It seemed to me so sweet to have a friend. In your youth and character of mind there was so much about which the tough strings of my heart wound themselves that I could not bear to lose you, to suffer you to know me for what I was. I blinded, I deceived you as to my past deeds,—*that* was base in me; but I swore to my own heart to keep you unexposed to every danger and free from every vice that darkened my own path. I kept that oath till this night, when, seeing that you began to recoil from me, and dreading that you should desert me, I thought to bind you to me forever by implicating you in this fellowship of crime. I am punished, and justly. Go, I repeat; leave me to the fate that strides nearer and nearer to me day by day. You are a boy still,—I am no longer young. Habit is a second nature. Still, still I could repent,—I could begin life again. But repose! To look back, to remember, to be haunted night and day with deeds that shall meet me bodily and face to face on the last day—"

"Add not to the spectres! Come, fly this night, this hour!"

Gawtrey paused, irresolute and wavering; when at that moment he heard steps on the stairs below. He started, as starts the boar caught in his lair, and listened, pale and breathless.

"Hush! they are on us; they come!" As he whispered, the key from without turned in the wards, the door shook. "Soft! the bar preserves us both,—this way;" and the coiner crept to the door of the private stairs. He unlocked and opened it cautiously. A man sprang through the aperture.

"Yield! You are my prisoner!"

"Never!" cried Gawtrey, hurling back the intruder and clapping to the door, though other and stout men were pressing against it with all their power.

"Ho, ho! Who shall open the tiger's cage?"

At both doors now were heard the sound of voices. "Open in the king's name, or expect no mercy!"

"Hist!" said Gawtrety. "One way yet,—the window; the rope."

Morton opened the casement, Gawtrety uncoiled the rope. The dawn was breaking; it was light in the streets, but all seemed quiet without. The doors reeled and shook beneath the pressure of the pursuers. Gawtrety flung the rope across the street to the opposite parapet; after two or three efforts the grappling-hook caught firm hold,—the perilous path was made.

"On! quick! loiter not!" whispered Gawtrety. "You are active; it seems more dangerous than it is,—cling with both hands, shut your eyes. When on the other side,—you see the window of Birnie's room, enter it, descend the stairs, let yourself out, and you are safe."

"Go first," said Morton, in the same tone; "I will not leave you now. You will be longer getting across than I shall. I will keep guard till you are over."

"Hark! hark! Are you mad? *You* keep guard! What is your strength to mine? Twenty men shall not move that door while my weight is against it. Quick, or you destroy us both! Besides, you will hold the rope for me; it may not be strong enough for my bulk in itself. Stay, stay one moment! If you escape, and I fall,—Fanny—my father, he will take care of her. You remember—thanks! Forgive me all! Go; that's right!"

With a firm pulse, Morton threw himself on the dreadful bridge; it swung and crackled at his weight. Shifting his grasp rapidly, holding his breath, with set teeth, with closed eyes, he moved on, he gained the parapet, he stood safe on the opposite side. And now, straining his eyes across, he saw through the open casement into the chamber he had just quitted. Gawtrety was still standing against the door to the principal staircase, for that of the two was the weaker and the more assailed. Presently the explosion of a firearm was heard; they had shot through the panel. Gawtrety seemed

wounded, for he staggered forward and uttered a fierce cry; a moment more, and he gained the window, he seized the rope, he hung over the tremendous depth! Morton knelt by the parapet, holding the grappling hook in its place with convulsive grasp, and fixing his eyes, bloodshot with fear and suspense, on the huge bulk that clung for life to that slender cord!

"Le voilà! Le voilà!" cried a voice from the opposite side. Morton raised his gaze from Gawtreys; the casement was darkened by the forms of his pursuers, they had burst into the room. An officer sprang upon the parapet, and Gawtreys, now aware of his danger, opened his eyes, and as he moved on, glared upon the foe. The policeman deliberately raised his pistol. Gawtreys arrested himself; from a wound in his side the blood trickled slowly and darkly down, drop by drop, upon the stones below. Even the officers of law shuddered as they eyed him, his hair bristling, his cheek white, his lips drawn convulsively from his teeth, and his eyes glaring from beneath the frown of agony and menace in which yet spoke the indomitable power and fierceness of the man. His look so fixed, so intense, so stern, awed the policeman; his hand trembled as he fired, and the ball struck the parapet an inch below the spot where Morton knelt. An indistinct, wild, gurgling sound—half laugh, half yell of scorn and glee—broke from Gawtreys's lips. He swung himself on, near, near, nearer,—a yard from the parapet.

"You are saved!" cried Morton, when at the moment a volley burst from the fatal casement. The smoke rolled over both the fugitives; a groan, or rather howl, of rage and despair and agony appalled even the hardest on whose ear it came. Morton sprang to his feet and looked below. He saw on the rugged stones, far down, a dark, formless, motionless mass. The strong man of passion and levity, the giant who had played with life and soul as an infant with the baubles that it prizes and breaks, was what the Cæsar and the leper alike are when the clay is without God's breath,—what glory, genius, power, and beauty would be forever and forever if there were no God!

"There is another!" cried the voice of one of the pursuers. "Fire!"

"Poor Gawtreys!" muttered Philip. "I will fulfil your last wish," and scarcely conscious of the bullet that whistled by him, he disappeared behind the parapet.

CHAPTER XI.

GENTLY moved

By the soft wind of whispering silks. — DECKER.

THE reader may remember that while M. Favart and Mr. Birnie were holding commune in the lane, the sounds of festivity were heard from a house in the adjoining street. To that house we are now summoned.

At Paris, the gayeties of balls or *soirées* are, I believe, very rare in that period of the year in which they are most frequent in London. The entertainment now given was in honour of a christening; the lady who gave it, a relation of the new-born.

Madame de Merville was a young widow. Even before her marriage she had been distinguished in literature; she had written poems of more than common excellence; and being handsome, of good family, and large fortune, her talents made her an object of more interest than they might otherwise have done. Her poetry showed great sensibility and tenderness. If poetry be any index to the heart, you would have thought her one to love truly and deeply. Nevertheless, since she married, — as girls in France do, — not to please herself, but her parents, she made a *mariage de convenance*. M. de Merville was a sober, sensible man, past middle age. Not being fond of poetry, and by no means coveting a professional author for his wife, he had during their union, which lasted four years, discouraged his wife's *liaison* with Apollo.

But her mind, active and ardent, did not the less prey upon itself. At the age of four and twenty she became a widow, with an income large even in England for a single woman, and at Paris constituting no ordinary fortune. Madame de Merville, however, though a person of elegant taste, was neither ostentatious nor selfish; she had no children, and she lived quietly in apartments, handsome, indeed, but not more than adequate to the small establishment which — where, as on the Continent, the costly convenience of an entire house is not usually incurred — sufficed for her retinue. She devoted at least half her income, which was entirely at her own disposal, partly to the aid of her own relations, who were not rich, and partly to the encouragement of the literature she cultivated. Although she shrank from the ordeal of publication, her poems and sketches of romance were read to her own friends, and possessed an eloquence seldom accompanied with so much modesty. Thus, her reputation, though not blown about by the winds, was high in her own circle, and her position in fashion and in fortune made her looked up to by her relations as the head of her family; they regarded her as *femme supérieure*; and her advice with them was equivalent to a command. Eugénie de Merville was a strange mixture of qualities at once feminine and masculine. On the one hand, she had a strong will, independent views, some contempt for the world, and followed her own inclinations without servility to the opinion of others; on the other hand, she was susceptible, romantic, of a sweet, affectionate, kind disposition. Her visit to M. Love, however indiscreet, was not less in accordance with her character than her charity to the mechanic's wife; masculine and careless where an eccentric thing was to be done, — curiosity satisfied, or some object in female diplomacy achieved; womanly, delicate, and gentle the instant her benevolence was appealed to or her heart touched. She had now been three years a widow, and was consequently at the age of twenty-seven. Despite the tenderness of her poetry and her character, her reputation was unblemished. She had never been in love. People who are much occupied do not fall in love easily; besides, Madame de

Merville was refining, exacting, and wished to find heroes where she only met handsome dandies or ugly authors. Moreover, Eugénie was both a vain and a proud person,—vain of her celebrity, and proud of her birth. She was one whose goodness of heart made her always active in promoting the happiness of others. She was not only generous and charitable, but willing to serve people by good offices as well as money. Everybody loved her. The new-born infant, to whose addition to the Christian community the *fête* of this night was dedicated, was the pledge of a union which Madame de Merville had managed to effect between two young persons, first cousins to each other, and related to herself. There had been scruples of parents to remove, money matters to adjust; Eugénie had smoothed all. The husband and wife, still lovers, looked up to her as the author, under Heaven, of their happiness.

The gala of that night had been, therefore, of a nature more than usually pleasurable, and the mirth did not sound hollow, but rung from the heart. Yet as Eugénie from time to time contemplated the young people whose eyes ever sought each other,—so fair, so tender, and so joyous did they seem,—a melancholy shadow darkened her brow, and she sighed involuntarily. Once the young wife, Madame d'Anville, approaching her timidly, said,—

“Ah, my sweet cousin, when shall we see you as happy as ourselves? There is such happiness,” she added innocently, and with a blush, “in being a mother! That little life all one's own,—it is something to think of every hour!”

“Perhaps,” said Eugénie, smiling, and seeking to turn the conversation from a subject that touched too nearly upon feelings and thoughts her pride did not wish to reveal,—“perhaps it is you, then, who have made our cousin, poor M. de Vaudemont, so determined to marry? Pray be more cautious with him. How difficult I have found it to prevent his bringing into our family some one to make us all ridiculous!”

“True,” said Madame d'Anville, laughing. “But then, the Vicomte is so poor, and in debt. He would fall in love, not with the demoiselle, but the dower. *À propos* of that,

how cleverly you took advantage of his boastful confession to break off his *liaisons* with that *bureau de mariage*."

"Yes; I congratulate myself on that manœuvre. Unpleasant as it was to go to such a place (for of course I could not send for M. Love here), it would have been still more unpleasant to receive such a Madame de Vaudemont as our cousin would have presented to us. Only think,—he was the rival of an *épicier*! I heard that there was some curious *dénouement* to the farce of that establishment, but I could never get from Vaudemont the particulars; he was ashamed of them, I fancy."

"What droll professions there are in Paris!" said Madame d'Anville. "As if people could not marry without going to an office for a spouse as we go for a servant! And so the establishment is broken up? And you never again saw that dark, wild-looking boy who so struck your fancy that you have taken him as the original for the Murillo sketch of the youth in that charming tale you read to us the other evening? Ah! cousin, I think you were a little taken with him. The *bureau de mariage* had its allurements for you as well as for our poor cousin!" The young mother said this laughingly and carelessly.

"Pooh!" returned Madame de Merville, laughing also; but a slight blush broke over her natural paleness. "But *à propos* of the Vicomte, you know how cruelly he has behaved to that poor boy of his by his English wife,—never seen him since he was an infant; kept him at some school in England,—and all because his vanity does not like the world to know that he has a son of nineteen! Well, I have induced him to recall this poor youth."

"Indeed! and how?"

"Why," said Eugénie, with a smile, "he wanted a loan, poor man, and I could therefore impose conditions by way of interest. But I also managed to conciliate him to the proposition by representing that if the young man were good-looking, he might himself, with our connections, etc., form an advantageous marriage, and that in such a case, if the father treated him now justly and kindly, he would naturally par-

take with the father whatever benefits the marriage might confer."

"Ah! you are an excellent diplomatist, Eugénie; and you turn people's heads by always acting from your heart. Hush! here comes the Vicomte."

"A delightful ball," said M. de Vaudemont, approaching the hostess. "Pray, has that young lady yonder, in the pink dress, any fortune? She is pretty,—eh? You observe she is looking at me—I mean at us!"

"My dear cousin, what a compliment you pay to marriage! You have had two wives, and you are ever on the *qui vive* for a third!"

"What would you have me do? We cannot resist the overtures of your bewitching sex. Hum! what fortune has she?"

"Not a *sou*; besides, she is engaged."

"Oh! now I look at her, she is not pretty, not at all. I made a mistake. I did not mean her, I meant the young lady in blue."

"Worse and worse! she is married already. Shall I present you?"

"Ah! Monsieur de Vaudemont," said Madame d'Anville, "have you found out a new *bureau de mariage*?"

The Vicomte pretended not to hear that question, but turning to Eugénie, took her aside, and said, with an air in which he endeavoured to throw a great deal of sorrow: "You know, my dear cousin, that, to oblige you, I consented to send for my son, though, as I always said, it is very unpleasant for a man like me, in the prime of life, to hawk about a great boy of nineteen or twenty. People soon say, '*Old Vaudemont, and young Vaudemont.*' However, a father's feelings are never appealed to in vain." Here the Vicomte put his handkerchief to his eyes, and after a pause, continued: "I sent for him,—I even went to your old *bonne*, Madame Dufour, to make a bargain for her lodgings; and this day—guess my grief—I received a letter sealed with black. My son is dead! A sudden fever,—it is shocking!"

"Horrible! Dead,—your own son, whom you hardly ever saw, never since he was an infant!"

"Yes, that softens the blow very much. And now, you see, *I must* marry. If the boy had been good-looking and like me, and so forth, why, as you observed, he might have made a good match and allowed me a certain sum, or we could have all lived together."

"And your son is dead, and you come to a ball!"

"*Je suis philosophe*," said the Vicomte, shrugging his shoulders. "And, as you say, I never saw him. It saves me seven hundred francs a year. Don't say a word to any one; I sha'n't give out that he is dead, poor fellow! Pray be discreet; you see there are some ill-natured people who might think it odd I do not shut myself up. I can wait till Paris is quite empty. It would be a pity to lose any opportunity at present, for *now*, you see, *I must* marry!" And the *philosophe* sauntered away.

CHAPTER XII.

Guiomar.

Those devotions I am to pay

Are written in my heart, not in this book.

Rutilio. I am pursued; all the ports are stopped too,—

Not any hope to escape; behind, before me,

On either side, I am beset.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Custom of the Country*.

THE party were just gone; it was already the peep of day; the wheels of the last carriage had died in the distance.

Madame de Merville had dismissed her woman and was seated in her own room, leaning her head musingly on her hand.

Beside her was the table that held her manuscripts and a few books, amidst which were scattered vases of flowers. On a pedestal beneath the window was placed a marble bust of Dante. Through the open door were seen in perspective the rooms just deserted by her guests; the lights still burned in

the chandeliers and *girandoles*, contending with the daylight that came through the half-closed curtains. The person of the inmate was in harmony with the apartment. It was characterized by a certain grace which, for want of a better epithet, writers are prone to call classical or antique. Her complexion, seeming paler than usual by that light, was yet soft and delicate; the features well cut, but small and womanly. About the face there was that rarest of all charms, the combination of intellect with sweetness. The eyes, of a dark blue, were thoughtful, perhaps melancholy, in their expression; but the long dark lashes, and the shape of the eyes, themselves more long than full, gave to their intelligence a softness approaching to languor, increased, perhaps, by that slight shadow round and below the orbs which is common with those who have tasked too much either the mind or the heart. The contour of the face, without being sharp or angular, had yet lost a little of the roundness of earlier youth; and the hand on which she leaned was perhaps even too white, too delicate, for the beauty which belongs to health; but the throat and bust were of exquisite symmetry.

"I am not happy," murmured Eugénie to herself, "yet I scarce know why. Is it really, as we women of romance have said till the saying is worn threadbare, that the destiny of women is not fame, but love? Strange, then, that while I have so often pictured what love should be, I have never felt it. And now, and now," she continued, half rising, and with a natural pang, — "now I am no longer in my first youth. If I loved, should I be loved again? How happy the young pair seemed, — *they* are never alone!"

At this moment, at a distance, was heard the report of fire-arms, — again! Eugénie started, and called to her servant, who, with one of the waiters hired for the night, was engaged in removing, and nibbling as he removed, the remains of the feast. "What is that, at this hour? Open the window and look out!"

"I can see nothing, Madame."

"Again, — that is the third time. Go into the street and look; some one must be in danger."

The servant and the waiter, both curious, and not willing to part company, ran down the stairs, and thence into the street.

Meanwhile Morton, after vainly attempting Birnie's window, which the traitor had previously locked and barred against the escape of his intended victim, crept rapidly along the roof, screened by the parapet not only from the shot, but the sight of the foe. But just as he gained the point at which the lane made an angle with the broad street it adjoined, he cast his eyes over the parapet and perceived that one of the officers had ventured himself to the fearful bridge. He was pursued,—detection and capture seemed inevitable. He paused, and breathed hard. *He*, once the heir to such fortunes, the darling of such affections,—he the hunted accomplice of a gang of miscreants! That was the thought that paralyzed,—the disgrace, not the danger. But he was in advance of the pursuer; he hastened on, he turned the angle, he heard a shout behind from the opposite side,—the officer had passed the bridge. "It is but one man as yet," thought he, and his nostrils dilated and his hands clenched as he glided on, glancing at each casement as he passed.

Now, as youth and vigour thus struggled against Law for life, near at hand Death was busy with toil and disease.

In a miserable *grabat*, or garret, a mechanic, yet young, and stricken by a lingering malady contracted by the labour of his occupation, was slowly passing from that world which had frowned on his cradle, and relaxed not the gloom of its aspect to comfort his bed of Death. Now, this man had married for love, and his wife had loved him; and it was the cares of that early marriage which had consumed him to the bone. But extreme want, if long continued, eats up love when it has nothing else to eat. And when people are very long dying, the people they fret and trouble begin to think of that too often hypocritical prettiness of phrase called "a happy release." So the worn-out and half-famished wife did not care three straws for the dying husband whom a year or two ago she had vowed to love and cherish in sickness and in health. But still she *seemed* to care, for she moaned and pined and wept as the man's breath grew fainter and fainter.

"Ah, Jean!" said she, sobbing, "what will become of *me*, a poor lone widow, with nobody to work for my bread?" And with that thought she took on worse than before.

"I am stifling," said the dying man, rolling round his ghastly eyes. "How hot it is! Open the window; I should like to see the light, — daylight once again."

"*Mon Dieu*, what whims he has, poor man!" muttered the woman, without stirring.

The poor wretch put out his skeleton hand and clutched his wife's arm.

"I sha' n't trouble you long, Marie! Air — air!"

"Jean, you will make yourself worse, — besides, I shall catch my death of cold; I have scarce a rag on. But I will just open the door."

"Pardon me," groaned the sufferer; "leave me, then."

Poor fellow! perhaps at that moment the thought of unkindness was sharper than the sharp cough which brought blood at every paroxysm. He did not like her so near him, but he did not blame her. Again, I say, poor fellow!"

The woman opened the door, went to the other side of the room, and sat down on an old box and began darning an old neck-handkerchief. The silence was soon broken by the moans of the fast-dying man, and again he muttered, as he tossed to and fro, with baked white lips, —

"*Je m'étouffe!* — air!"

There was no resisting that prayer, it seemed so like the last. The wife laid down the needle, put the handkerchief round her throat, and opened the window.

"Do you feel easier now?"

"Bless you, Marie, yes! That's good, good. It puts me in mind of old days, that breath of air, before we came to Paris. I wish I could work for you *now*, Marie."

"Jean, my poor Jean!" said the woman; and the words and the voice took back her hardening heart to the fresh fields and tender thoughts of the past time. And she walked up to the bed, and he leaned his temples, damp with livid dews, upon her breast.

"I have been a sad burden to you, Marie; we should not

have married so soon. But I thought I was stronger. Don't cry; we have no little ones, thank God. It will be much better for you when I am gone."

And so, word after word gasped out, he stopped suddenly, and seemed to fall asleep.

The wife then attempted gently to lay him once more on his pillow, — the head fell back heavily; the jaw had dropped; the teeth were set; the eyes were open and like the stone. The truth broke on her!

"Jean, Jean! My God, he is dead! and I was unkind to him at the last!" With these words she fell upon the corpse, happily herself insensible.

Just at that moment a human face peered in at the window. Through that aperture, after a moment's pause, a young man leaped lightly into the room. He looked round with a hurried glance, but scarcely noticed the forms stretched on the pallet. It was enough for him that they seemed to sleep, and saw him not. He stole across the room, the door of which Marie had left open, and descended the stairs. He had almost gained the courtyard into which the stairs conducted, when he heard voices below by the porter's lodge.

"The police have discovered a gang of coiners."

"Coiners?"

"Yes, one has been shot dead. I have seen his body in the kennel; another has fled along the roofs, — a desperate fellow! We were to watch for him. Let us go upstairs and get on the roof and look out."

By the hum of approval that followed this proposition, Morton judged rightly that it had been addressed to several persons whom curiosity and the explosion of the pistols had drawn from their beds, and who were grouped round the porter's lodge. What was to be done? To advance was impossible; was there yet time to retreat? It was at least the only course left him. He sprang back up the stairs; he had just gained the first flight when he heard steps descending. Then suddenly it flashed across him that he had left open the window above, that, doubtless, by that imprudent oversight the officer in pursuit had detected a clew to the path he had taken.

What was to be done? Die as Gawtrety had done?—death rather than the galleys! As he thus resolved, he saw to the right the open door of an apartment in which lights still glimmered in their sockets; it seemed deserted. He entered boldly and at once, closing the door after him. Wines and viands still left on the table; gilded mirrors, reflecting the stern face of the solitary intruder; here and there an artificial flower; a knot of ribbon on the floor,—all betokening the gayeties and graces of luxurious life, the dance, the revel, the feast, all this in one apartment! Above, in the same house, the pallet, the corpse, the widow,—famine and woe! Such is a great city; such, above all, is Paris, where under the same roof are gathered such antagonist varieties of the social state! Nothing strange in this; it *is* strange and sad that so little do people thus neighbours know of each other that the owner of those rooms had a heart soft to every distress, but she did not know the distress so close at hand. The music that had charmed her guests had mounted gayly to the vexed ears of agony and hunger. Morton passed the first room—a second; he came to a third, and Eugénie de Merville, looking up at that instant, saw before her an apparition that might well have alarmed the boldest. His head was uncovered, his dark hair shadowed in wild and disorderly profusion the pale face and features, beautiful indeed, but at that moment of the beauty which an artist would impart to a young gladiator,—stamped with defiance, menace, and despair. The disordered garb, the fierce aspect, the dark eyes, that literally shone through the shadows of the room,—all conspired to increase the terror of so abrupt a presence.

“What are you? What do you seek here?” said she, falteringly, placing her hand on the bell as she spoke.

Upon that soft hand Morton laid his own.

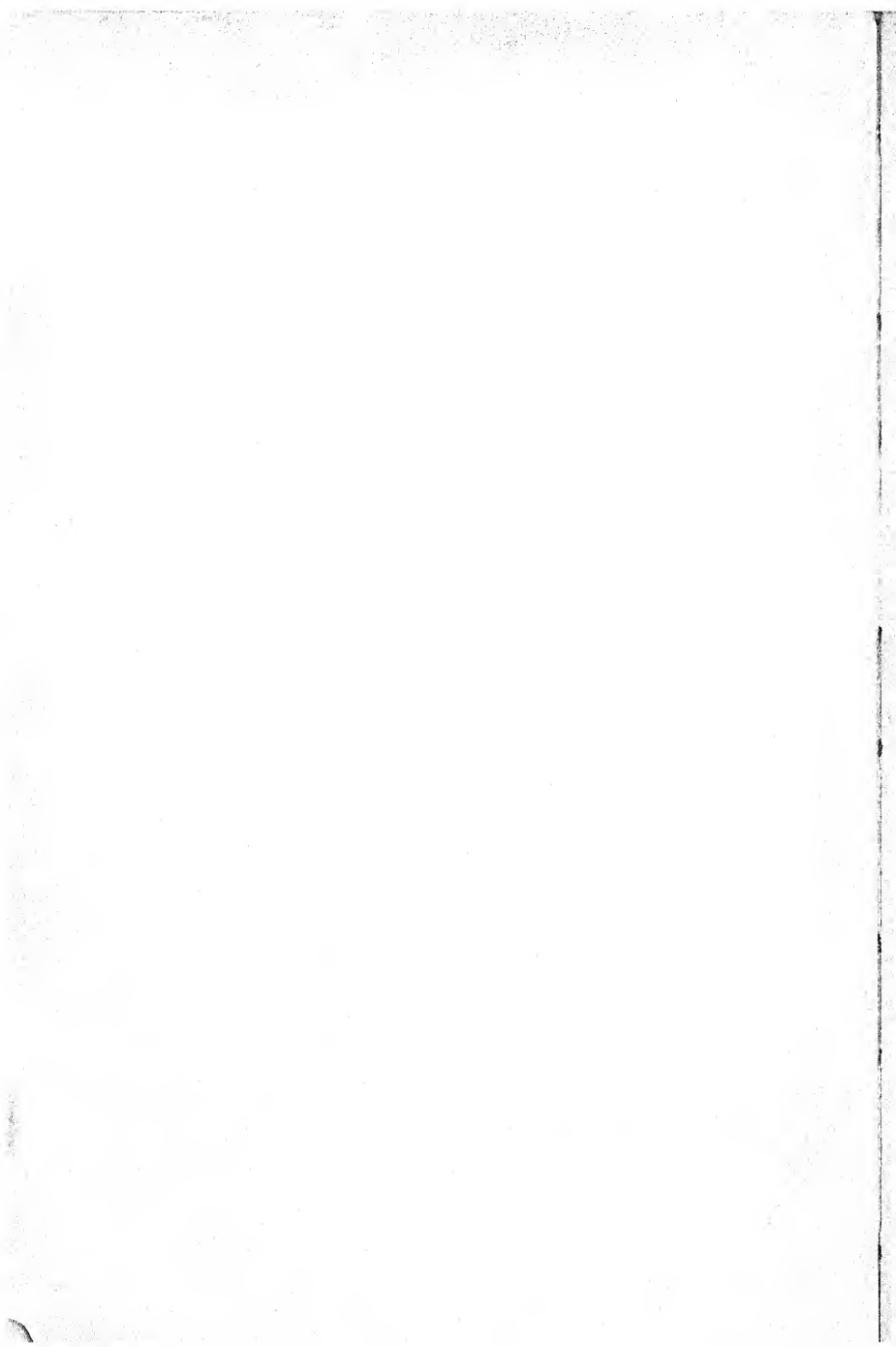
“I seek my life! I am pursued! I am at your mercy! I am innocent! Can you save me?”

As he spoke, the door of the outer room beyond was heard to open, and steps and voices were at hand.

“Ah!” he exclaimed, recoiling as he recognized her face. And is it to *you* that I have fled?”



MORTON'S SUDDEN APPEARANCE BEFORE EUGÉNIE DE MERVILLE.



Eugénie also recognized the stranger; and there was something in their relative positions — the suppliant, the protectress — that excited both her imagination and her pity. A slight colour mantled to her cheeks; her look was gentle and compassionate.

"Poor boy, so young!" she said. "Hush!"

She withdrew her hand from his, retired a few steps, lifted a curtain drawn across a recess, and pointing to an alcove that contained one of those sofa-beds common in French houses, added in a whisper, —

"Enter, — you are saved."

Morton obeyed, and Eugénie replaced the curtain.

CHAPTER XIII.

Guïomar. Speak, what are you ?

Rutilio. Gracious woman, hear me. I am a stranger :
And in that I answer all your demands.

Custom of the Country.

EUGÉNIE replaced the curtain. And scarcely had she done so ere the steps in the outer room entered the chamber where she stood. Her servant was accompanied by two officers of the police.

"Pardon, Madame," said one of the latter, "but we are in pursuit of a criminal. We think he must have entered this house through a window above while your servant was in the street. Permit us to search."

"Without doubt," answered Eugénie, seating herself. "If he has entered, look in the other apartments. I have not quitted this room."

"You are right. Accept our apologies;" and the officers turned back to examine every corner where the fugitive was *not*. For in that, the scouts of Justice resembled their mistress: when does man's justice look to the right place?

The servant lingered to repeat the tale he had heard, the sight he had seen, when at that instant he saw the curtain of the alcove slightly stirred. He uttered an exclamation, sprung to the bed, his hand touched the curtain. Eugénie seized his arm. She did not speak; but as he turned his eyes to her, astonished, he saw that she trembled, and that her cheek was as white as marble.

"Madame," he said, hesitating, "there is some one hid in the recess."

"There is! Be silent!"

A suspicion flashed across the servant's mind. The pure, the proud, the immaculate Eugénie!

"There is! and in Madame's chamber!" he faltered unconsciously.

Eugénie's quick apprehensions seized the foul thought. Her eyes flashed, her cheek crimsoned; but her lofty and generous nature conquered even the indignant and scornful burst that rushed to her lips. The truth!—could she trust the man? A doubt, and the charge of the human life rendered to her might be betrayed. Her colour fell, tears gushed to her eyes.

"I have been kind to you, François. Not a word!"

"Madame confides in me, — it is enough," said the Frenchman, bowing, with a slight smile on his lips; and he drew back respectfully.

One of the police officers re-entered.

"We have done, Madame; he is not here. Aha! that curtain!"

"It is Madame's bed," said François; "but I have looked behind."

"I am most sorry to have disarranged you," said the policeman, satisfied with the answer; "but we shall have him yet." And he retired.

The last footsteps died away, the last door of the apartments closed behind the officers, and Eugénie and her servant stood alone gazing on each other.

"You may retire," said she at last; and taking her purse from the table, she placed it in his hands.

The man took it, with a significant look.

"Madame may depend on my discretion."

Eugénie was alone again. Those words rang in her ear. Eugénie de Merville dependent on the discretion of her lackey! She sunk into her chair, and, her excitement succeeded by exhaustion, leaned her face on her hands, and burst into tears. She was aroused by a low voice; she looked up, and the young man was kneeling at her feet.

"Go! go!" she said; "I have done for you all I can. You heard, you heard! my own hireling, too! At the hazard of my own good name you are saved. Go!"

"Of your good name!"—for Eugénie forgot that it was looks, not words, that had so wrung her pride—"your good name!" he repeated; and glancing round the room—the toilette, the curtain, the recess he had quitted,—all that bespoke that chastest sanctuary of a chaste woman, which for a stranger to enter is as it were to profane—her meaning broke on him. "Your good name! your hireling! No, Madame,—no!" And as he spoke, he rose to his feet. "Not for me that sacrifice! Your humanity shall not cost you so dear. Ho, there! I am the man you seek." And he strode to the door.

Eugénie was penetrated with the answer. She sprung to him, she grasped his garments.

"Hush! hush! for mercy's sake! What would you do? Think you I could ever be happy again if the confidence you placed in me were betrayed? Be calm, be still. I knew not what I said. It will be easy to undeceive the man—later—when you are saved. And you are innocent, are you not?"

"Oh, Madame," said Morton, "from my soul I say it, I am innocent—not of poverty, wretchedness, error, shame; I am innocent of crime. May Heaven bless you!"

And as he reverently kissed the hand laid on his arm, there was something in his voice so touching, in his manner something so above his fortunes, that Eugénie was lost in her feelings of compassion, surprise, and something, it might be, of admiration in her wonder.

"And, oh!" he said passionately, gazing on her with his dark, brilliant eyes, liquid with emotion, "you have made my

life sweet in saving it, — you, you, — of whom, ever since the first time, almost the sole time, I beheld you, I have so often mused and dreamed. Henceforth, whatever befall me, there will be some recollections that will — that —”

He stopped short, for his heart was too full for words; and the silence said more to Eugénie than if all the eloquence of Rousseau had glowed upon his tongue.

“And who and what are you?” she asked, after a pause.

“An exile, an orphan, an outcast! I have no name! Farewell!”

“No, stay yet, — the danger is not past. Wait till my servant is gone to rest; I hear him yet. Sit down, sit down. And whither would you go?”

“I know not.”

“Have you no friends?”

“None.”

“No home?”

“None.”

“And the police of Paris so vigilant!” cried Eugénie, wringing her hands. “What is to be done? I shall have saved you in vain, you will be discovered! Of what do they charge you? Not robbery, not —”

And she, too, stopped short, for she did not dare to breathe the black word — “Murder!”

“I know not,” said Morton, putting his hand to his forehead, “except of being friends with the only man who befriended me, — and they have killed him!”

“Another time you shall tell me all.”

“Another time!” he exclaimed eagerly, “*shall* I see you again?”

Eugénie blushed beneath the gaze and the voice of joy.

“Yes,” she said, “yes; but I must reflect. Be calm, be silent. Ah! a happy thought!”

She sat down, wrote a hasty line, sealed, and gave it to Morton.

“Take this note, as addressed, to Madame Dufour; it will provide you with a safe lodging. She is a person I can depend on, — an old servant who lived with my mother, and to

whom I have given a small pension. She has a lodging, it is lately vacant; I promised to procure her a tenant. Go; say nothing of what has passed. I will see her, and arrange all. Wait! Hark! all is still! I will go first, and see that no one watches you. Stop!" (and she threw open the window, and looked into the court.) "The porter's door is open, — that is fortunate! Hurry on, and God be with you!"

In a few minutes Morton was in the streets. It was still early, the thoroughfares deserted, none of the shops yet open. The address on the note was to a street at some distance, on the other side of the Seine. He passed along the same *Quai* which he had trodden but a few hours since; he passed the same splendid bridge on which he had stood despairing, to quit it revived; he gained the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré. A young man in a cabriolet, on whose fair cheek burned the hectic of late vigils and lavish dissipation, was rolling leisurely home from the gaming-house, at which he had been more than usually fortunate, — his pockets were laden with notes and gold. He bent forwards as Morton passed him. Philip, absorbed in his revery, perceived him not, and continued his way. The gentleman turned down one of the streets to the left, stopped, and called to the servant dozing behind his cabriolet.

"Follow that passenger, — quietly; see where he lodges; be sure to find out and let me know. I shall go home without you." With that he drove on.

Philip, unconscious of the *espionage*, arrived at a small house in a quiet but respectable street, and rang the bell several times before at last he was admitted by Madame Dufour herself, in her nightcap. The old woman looked askant and alarmed at the unexpected apparition; but the note seemed at once to satisfy her. She conducted him to an apartment on the first floor, small, but neatly and even elegantly furnished, consisting of a sitting-room and a bed-chamber, and said quietly, —

"Will they suit Monsieur?"

To Monsieur they seemed a palace. Morton nodded assent.

"And will Monsieur sleep for a short time?"

"Yes."

"The bed is well aired. The rooms have only been vacant three days since. Can I get you anything till your luggage arrives?"

"No."

The woman left him. He threw off his clothes, flung himself on the bed, and did not wake till noon.

When his eyes unclosed, when they rested on that calm chamber, with its air of health and cleanliness and comfort, it was long before he could convince himself that he was yet awake. He missed the loud, deep voice of Gawtreay, the smoke of the dead man's meerschaum, the gloomy garret, the distained walls, the stealthy whisper of the loathed Birnie; slowly the life led and the life gone within the last twelve hours grew upon his struggling memory. He groaned and turned uneasily round, when the door slightly opened, and he sprung up fiercely, —

"Who is there?"

"It is only I, sir," answered Madame Dufour. "I have been in three times to see if you were stirring. There is a letter I believe for you, sir, though there is no name to it," and she laid the letter on the chair beside him. Did it come from her, the saving angel? He seized it. The cover was blank; it was sealed with a small device, as of a ring seal. He tore it open, and found four *billets de banque* for 1,000 francs each, — a sum equivalent in our money to about £160.

"Who sent this, the — the lady from whom I brought the note?"

"Madame de Merville? Certainly not, sir," said Madame Dufour, who, with the privilege of age, was now unscrupulously filling the water-jugs and settling the toilette-table. "A young man called about two hours after you had gone to bed; and describing you, inquired if you lodged here, and what your name was. I said you had just arrived, and that I did not yet know your name. So he went away, and came again half-an-hour afterwards with this letter, which he charged me to deliver to you safely."

"A young man, — a gentleman?"

"No, sir; he seemed a smart but common sort of lad," — for the unsophisticated Madame Dufour did not discover in the plain black frock and drab gaiters of the bearer of that letter the simple livery of an English gentleman's groom.

Whom could it come from, if not from Madame de Merville? Perhaps one of Gawtrey's late friends. A suspicion of Arthur Beaufort crossed him, but he indignantly dismissed it. Men are seldom credulous of what they are unwilling to believe! What kindness had the Beauforts hitherto shown him? — left his mother to perish broken-hearted, stolen from him his brother, and steeled, in that brother, the only heart wherein he had a right to look for gratitude and love! No, it *must* be Madame de Merville. He dismissed Madame Dufour for pen and paper, rose, wrote a letter to Eugénie — grateful, but proud — and inclosed the notes. He then summoned Madame Dufour, and sent her with his despatch.

"Ah, Madame," said the *ci-devant bonne*, when she found herself in Eugénie's presence. "The poor lad! how handsome he is, and how shameful in the Vicomte to let him wear such clothes!"

"The Vicomte!"

"Oh, my dear mistress, you must not deny it. You told me in your note to ask him no questions, but I guessed at once. The Vicomte told me himself that he should have the young gentleman over in a few days. You need not be ashamed of him. You will see what a difference clothes will make in his appearance; and I have taken it on myself to order a tailor to go to him. The Vicomte *must* pay me."

"Not a word to the Vicomte as yet. We will surprise him," said Eugénie, laughing.

Madame de Merville had been all that morning trying to invent some story to account for her interest in the lodger, and now how Fortune favoured her!

"But is that a letter for me?"

"And I had almost forgot it," said Madame Dufour, as she extended the letter.

Whatever there had hitherto been in the circumstances connected with Morton that had roused the interest and excited

the romance of Eugénie de Merville, her fancy was yet more attracted by the tone of the letter she now read. For though Morton, more accustomed to speak than to write French, expressed himself with less precision and a less euphuistic selection of phrase than the authors and *élégans* who formed her usual correspondents, there was an innate and rough nobleness, a strong and profound feeling, in every line of his letter, which increased her surprise and admiration.

"All that surrounds him, all that belongs to him, is strangeness and mystery!" murmured she; and she sat down to reply.

When Madame Dufour departed with that letter, Eugénie remained silent and thoughtful for more than an hour, Morton's letter before her; and sweet in their indistinctness were the recollections and the images that crowded on her mind.

Morton, satisfied by the earnest and solemn assurances of Eugénie that she was not the unknown donor of the sum she reenclosed, after puzzling himself in vain to form any new conjectures as to the quarter whence it came, felt that under his present circumstances it would be an absurd Quixotism to refuse to apply what the very Providence to whom he had anew consigned himself seemed to have sent to his aid; and it placed him, too, beyond the offer of all pecuniary assistance from one from whom he could least have brooked to receive it. He consented, therefore, to all that the loquacious tailor proposed to him; and it would have been difficult to have recognized the wild and frenzied fugitive in the stately and graceful form, with its young beauty and air of well-born pride, which the next day sat by the side of Eugénie. And that day he told his sad and troubled story, and Eugénie wept: and from that day he came daily; and two weeks—happy, dreamlike, intoxicating to both—passed by; and as their last sun set, he was kneeling at her feet, and breathing to one to whom the homage of wit and genius and complacent wealth had hitherto been vainly proffered the impetuous, agitated, delicious secrets of the First Love. He spoke and rose to depart forever,—when the look and sigh detained him.

The next day, after a sleepless night, Eugénie de Merville sent for the Vicomte de Vaudemont.

CHAPTER XIV.

A SILVER river small
In sweet accents
Its music vents;
The warbling virginal
To which the merry birds do sing,
Timed with stops of gold the silver string.

SIR RICHARD FANSHAWE.

ONE evening, several weeks after the events just commemorated, a stranger, leading in his hand a young child, entered the churchyard of H——. The sun had not long set, and the short twilight of deepening summer reigned in the tranquil skies; you might still hear from the trees above the graves the chirp of some joyous bird. What cared he, the denizen of the skies, for the dead that slept below; what did he value save the greenness and repose of the spot,—to him alike the garden or the grave! As the man and the child passed, the robin, scarcely scared by their tread from the long grass beside one of the mounds, looked at them with its bright, blithe eye. It was a famous plot for the robin,—the old churchyard! That domestic bird—"the friend of man," as it has been called by the poets—found a jolly supper among the worms!

The stranger, on reaching the middle of the sacred ground, paused and looked round him wistfully. He then approached, slowly and hesitatingly, an oblong tablet, on which were graven, in letters yet fresh and new, these words:—

TO THE
MEMORY OF ONE CALUMNIATED AND WRONGED
THIS BURIAL-STONE IS DEDICATED
BY HER SON.

Such, with the addition of the dates of birth and death, was the tablet which Philip Morton had directed to be placed

over his mother's bones; and around it was set a simple palisade, which defended it from the tread of the children, who sometimes, in defiance of the beadle, played over the dust of the former race.

"Thy son!" muttered the stranger, while the child stood quietly by his side, pleased by the trees, the grass, the song of the birds, and recking not of grief or death,— "thy son! but not thy favoured son, thy darling, thy youngest born; on what spot of earth do thine eyes look down on *him*? Surely in heaven thy love has preserved the one whom on earth thou didst most cherish from the sufferings and the trials that have visited the less-favoured outcast. Oh, Mother, Mother! it was not his crime — not Philip's — that he did not fulfil to the last the trust bequeathed to him! Happier, perhaps, as it is! And, oh! if thy memory be graven as deeply in my brother's heart as my own, how often will it warn and save him! That memory! — it has been to me the angel of my life! To thee, to thee, even in death, I owe it, if though erring I am not criminal; if I have lived with the lepers, and am still undefiled!" His lips then were silent, not his heart!

After a few minutes thus consumed he turned to the child, and said, gently and in a tremulous voice, "Fanny, you have been taught to pray, you will live near this spot; will you come sometimes here and pray that you may grow up good and innocent, and become a blessing to those who love you?"

"Will Papa ever come to hear me pray?"

That sad and unconscious question went to the heart of Morton. The child could not comprehend death. He had sought to explain it, but she had been accustomed to consider her protector dead when he was absent from her, and she still insisted that he must come again to life. And that man of turbulence and crime, who had passed unrepentant, unabolved, from sin to judgment: it was an awful question,— "If *he* should hear her pray?"

"Yes!" said he, after a pause,— "yes, Fanny, there *is* a Father who will hear you pray; and pray to Him to be merciful to those who have been kind to you. Fanny, you and I may never meet again!"

"Are you going to die too? *Méchant*, every one dies to Fanny!" and clinging to him endearingly, she put up her lips to kiss him. He took her in his arms; and as a tear fell upon her rosy cheek, she said, "Don't cry, brother, for I love you."

"Do you, dear Fanny? Then, for my sake, when you come to this place, if any one will give you a few flowers, scatter them on that stone. And now we will go to one whom you must love also, and to whom, as I have told you, *he* sends you,—he who — Come!"

As he thus spoke and placed Fanny again on the ground, he was startled to see, precisely on the spot where he had seen before the like apparition, on the same spot where the father had cursed the son, the motionless form of an old man. Morton recognized, as if by an instinct rather than by an effort of the memory, the person to whom he was bound.

He walked slowly towards him; but Fanny abruptly left his side, lured by a moth that flitted duskily over the graves.

"Your name, sir, I think, is Simon Gawtrety?" said Morton. "I have come to England in quest of you."

"Of me?" said the old man, half rising, and his eyes, now completely blind, rolled vacantly over Morton's person,— "of me? For what? Who are you? I don't know your voice!"

"I come to you from your son!"

"My son!" exclaimed the old man, with great vehemence, — "the reprobate! the dishonoured! the infamous! the accursed —"

"Hush! you revile the dead!"

"Dead!" muttered the wretched father, tottering back to the seat he had quitted,— "dead!" and the sound of his voice was so full of anguish that the dog at his feet, which Morton had not hitherto perceived, echoed it with a dismal cry, that recalled to Philip the awful day in which he had seen the son quit the father for the last time on earth.

The sound brought Fanny to the spot; and with a laugh of delight, which made to it a strange contrast, she threw herself on the grass beside the dog and sought to entice it to play. So there in that place of death were knit together the

four links in the Great Chain,—lusty and blooming life, desolate and doting age, infancy, yet scarce conscious of a soul, and the dumb brute, that has no warrant of a Hereafter!

“Dead! dead!” repeated the old man, covering his sightless balls with his withered hands. “Poor William!”

“He remembered you to the last. He bade me seek you out, he bade me replace the guilty son with a thing pure and innocent as he had been had he died in his cradle,—a child to comfort your old age! Kneel, Fanny, I have found you a father who will cherish you—oh! you will, sir, will you not?—as he whom you may see no more!”

There was something in Morton’s voice so solemn that it awed and touched both the old man and the infant; and Fanny, creeping to the protector thus assigned to her, and putting her little hands confidently on his knees, said,—

“Fanny will love you if Papa wished it. Kiss Fanny.”

“Is it his child,—his?” said the blind man, sobbing. “Come to my heart; here, here! O God, forgive me!”

Morton did not think it right at that moment to undeceive him with regard to the poor child’s true connection with the deceased; and he waited in silence till Simon, after a burst of passionate grief and tenderness, rose, and still clasping the child to his breast, said,—

“Sir, forgive me! I am a very weak old man; I have many thanks to give; I have much, too, to learn. My poor son! he did not die in want,—did he?”

The particulars of Gawtrey’s fate, with his real name and the various *aliases* he had assumed, had appeared in the French journals, had been partially copied into the English, and Morton had expected to have been saved the painful narrative of that fearful death; but the utter seclusion of the old man, his infirmity, and his estranged habits had shut him out from the intelligence that it now devolved on Philip to communicate. Morton hesitated a little before he answered,—

“It is late now; you are not yet prepared to receive this poor infant at your home, nor to hear the details I have to state. I arrived in England but to-day. I shall lodge in the neighbourhood, for it is dear to me. If I may feel sure, then,

that you will receive and treasure this sacred and last deposit bequeathed to you by your unhappy son, I will bring my charge to you to-morrow, and we will then, more calmly than we can now, talk over the past."

"You do not answer my question," said Simon, passionately; "answer that, and I will wait for the rest. They call me a miser. Did I send out my only child to starve? Answer that!"

"Be comforted. He did not die in want; and he has even left some little fortune for Fanny, which I was to place in your hands."

"And he thought to bribe the old miser to be human! Well, well, well! I will go home."

"Lean on me!"

The dog leaped playfully on his master as the latter rose, and Fanny slid from Simon's arms to caress and talk to the animal in her own way. As they slowly passed through the churchyard Simon muttered incoherently to himself for several paces, and Morton would not disturb since he could not comfort him.

At last he said abruptly, "Did my son repent?"

"I hoped," answered Morton, evasively, "that, had his life been spared, he would have amended!"

"Tush, sir! I am past seventy; we repent! we never amend!" And Simon again sunk into his own dim and disconnected reveries.

At length they arrived at the blind man's house. The door was opened to them by an old woman of disagreeable and sinister aspect, dressed out much too gayly for the station of a servant, though such was her reputed capacity; but the miser's affliction saved her from the chance of his comment on her extravagance. As she stood in the doorway with a candle in her hand, she scanned curiously, and with no welcoming eye, her master's companions.

"Mrs. Boxer, my son is dead!" said Simon, in a hollow voice.

"And a good thing it is, then, sir!"

"For shame, woman!" said Morton, indignantly.

"Hey-day! sir! whom have we got here?"

"One," said Simon, sternly, "whom you will treat with respect. He brings me a blessing to lighten my loss. One harsh word to this child, and you quit my house!"

The woman looked perfectly thunderstruck; but, recovering herself, she said whiningly,—

"I! a harsh word to anything my dear, kind master cares for! And, Lord, what a sweet pretty creature it is! Come here, my dear!"

But Fanny shrunk back, and would not let go Philip's hand.

"To-morrow, then," said Morton; and he was turning away, when a sudden thought seemed to cross the old man,—

"Stay, sir, stay! I—I—did my son say I was rich? I am very, very poor,—nothing in the house, or I should have been robbed long ago!"

"Your son told me to bring money, not to ask for it!"

"Ask for it! No; but," added the old man, and a gleam of cunning intelligence shot over his face,— "but he had got into a bad set. Ask! No! Put up the door-chain, Mrs. Boxer!"

It was with doubt and misgivings that Morton, the next day, consigned the child, who had already nestled herself into the warmest core of his heart, to the care of Simon. Nothing short of that superstitious respect which all men owe to the wishes of the dead would have made him select for her that asylum; for Fate had now, in brightening his own prospects, given him an alternative in the benevolence of Madame de Merville. But Gawtreys had been so earnest on the subject that he felt as if he had no right to hesitate; and was it not a sort of atonement to any faults the son might have committed against the parent to place by the old man's hearth so sweet a charge?

The strange and peculiar mind and character of Fanny made him, however, yet more anxious than otherwise he might have been. She certainly deserved not the harsh name of imbecile or idiot, but she was different from all other children; she *felt* more acutely than most of her age, but she could not be taught to *reason*. There was something either

oblique or deficient in her intellect, which justified the most melancholy apprehensions; yet often, when some disordered, incoherent, inexplicable train of ideas most saddened the listener, it would be followed by fancies so exquisite in their strangeness, or feelings so endearing in their tenderness, that suddenly she seemed as much above as before she seemed below the ordinary measure of infant comprehension. She was like a creature to which Nature, in some cruel but bright caprice, has given all that belongs to poetry, but denied all that belongs to the common understanding necessary to mankind; or as a fairy changeling, not, indeed, according to the vulgar superstition, malignant and deformed, but lovelier than the children of men, and haunted by dim and struggling associations of a gentler and fairer being, yet wholly incapable to learn the dry and hard elements which make up the knowledge of actual life.

Morton, as well as he could, sought to explain to Simon the peculiarities in Fanny's mental constitution. He urged on him the necessity of providing for her careful instruction, and Simon promised to send her to the best school the neighbourhood could afford; but as the old man spoke, he dwelt so much on the supposed fact that Fanny was William's daughter, and with his remorse or affection there ran so interwoven a thread of selfishness and avarice, that Morton thought it would be dangerous to his interest in the child to undeceive his error. He, therefore,—perhaps excusably enough,—remained silent on that subject.

Gawtrey had placed with the superior of the convent, together with an order to give up the child to any one who should demand her in his true name, which he confided to the superior, a sum of nearly £300, which he solemnly swore had been honestly obtained, and which, in all his shifts and adversities, he had never allowed himself to touch. This sum, with the trifling deduction made for arrears due to the convent, Morton now placed in Simon's hands. The old man clutched the money, which was for the most in French gold, with a convulsive gripe; and then, as if ashamed of the impulse, said,—

"But you, sir,—will any sum—that is, any reasonable sum—be of use to you?"

"No! and if it were, it is neither yours nor mine,—it is hers. Save it for her, and add to it what you can."

While this conversation took place, Fanny had been consigned to the care of Mrs. Boxer, and Philip now rose to see and bid her farewell before he departed.

"I may come again to visit you, Mr. Gawtreys; and I pray Heaven to find that you and Fanny have been a mutual blessing to each other. Oh, remember how your son loved her!"

"He had a good heart in spite of all his sins. Poor William!" said Simon.

Philip Morton heard, and his lip curled with a sad and a just disdain.

If when, at the age of nineteen, William Gawtreys had quitted his father's roof, the father had then remembered that the son's heart was good, the son had been alive still, an honest and a happy man. Do ye not laugh, O ye all-listening Fiends! when men praise those dead whose virtues they discovered not when alive? It takes much marble to build the sepulchre,—how little of lath and plaster would have repaired the garret!

On turning into a small room adjoining the parlour in which Gawtreys sat, Morton found Fanny standing gloomily by a dull, soot-grimed window, which looked out on the dead walls of a small yard. Mrs. Boxer, seated by a table, was employed in trimming a cap, and putting questions to Fanny in that falsetto voice of endearment in which people not used to children are apt to address them.

"And so, my dear, they've never taught you to read or write? You've been sadly neglected, poor thing!"

"We must do our best to supply the deficiency," said Morton, as he entered.

"Bless me, sir, is that you?" and the *gouvernante* bustled up and dropped a low courtesy; for Morton, dressed then in the garb of a gentleman, was of a mien and person calculated to strike the gaze of the vulgar.

"Ah, brother!" cried Fanny, for by that name he had

taught her to call him, and she flew to his side, "come away. It's ugly there; it makes me cold."

"My child, I told you you must stay; but I shall hope to see you again some day. Will you not be kind to this poor creature, ma'am? Forgive me if I offended you last night, and favour me by accepting this, to show that we are friends." As he spoke, he slid his purse into the woman's hand. "I shall feel ever grateful for whatever you can do for Fanny."

"Fanny wants nothing from any one else; Fanny wants her brother."

"Sweet child! I fear she don't take to me. Will you like me, Miss Fanny?"

"No! get along!"

"Fie, Fanny! you remember you did not take to me at first. But she is so affectionate, ma'am; she never forgets a kindness."

"I will do all I can to please her, sir. And so she is really master's grandchild?" The woman fixed her eyes, as she spoke, so intently on Morton that he felt embarrassed, and busied himself, without answering, in caressing and soothing Fanny, who now seemed to awake to the affliction about to visit her; for though she did not weep—she very rarely wept—her slight frame trembled, her eyes closed, her cheeks, even her lips, were white, and her delicate hands were clasped tightly round the neck of the one about to abandon her to strange breasts.

Morton was greatly moved. "One kiss, Fanny! and do not forget me when we meet again."

The child pressed her lips to his cheek, but the lips were cold. He put her down gently; she stood mute and passive.

"Remember that *he* wished me to leave you here," whispered Morton, using an argument that never failed. "We must obey him; and so—God bless you, Fanny!"

He rose and retreated to the door; the child unclosed her eyes, and gazed at him with a strained, painful, imploring gaze; her lips moved, but she did not speak. Morton could not bear that silent woe. He sought to smile on her consol-

ingly, but the smile would not come. He closed the door, and hurried from the house.

From that day Fanny settled into a kind of dreary, inanimate stupor, which resembled that of the sonnambulist whom the magnetizer forgets to waken. Hitherto, with all the eccentricities or deficiencies of her mind, had mingled a wild and airy gayety. That was vanished. She spoke little, she never played; no toys could lure her; even the poor dog failed to win her notice. If she was told to do anything she stared vacantly and stirred not. She evinced, however, a kind of dumb regard to the old blind man; she would creep to his knees and sit there for hours, seldom answering when he addressed her, but uneasy, anxious, and restless, if he left her.

"Will you die too?" she asked once; the old man understood her not, and she did not try to explain. Early one morning, some days after Morton was gone, they missed her; she was not in the house nor the dull yard where she was sometimes dismissed and told to play,—told in vain. In great alarm the old man accused Mrs. Boxer of having spirited her away, and threatened and stormed so loudly that the woman, against her will, went forth to the search. At last she found the child in the churchyard, standing wistfully beside a tomb.

"What do you here, you little plague?" said Mrs. Boxer, rudely seizing her by the arm.

"This is the way they will both come back some day! I dreamed so!"

"If ever I catch you here again!" said the housekeeper, and wiping her brow with one hand, she struck the child with the other. Fanny had never been struck before. She recoiled in terror and amazement, and, for the first time since her arrival, burst into tears.

"Come, come, no crying! and if you tell master I'll beat you within an inch of your life!" So saying she caught Fanny in her arms, and walking about, scolding and menacing, till she had frightened back the child's tears, she returned triumphantly to the house, and bursting into the parlour, exclaimed, "Here's the little darling, sir!"

When old Simon learned where the child had been found he was glad; for it was his constant habit, whenever the evening was fine, to glide out to that churchyard — his dog his guide — and sit on his one favourite spot opposite the setting sun. This, not so much for the sanctity of the place or the meditations it might inspire, as because it was the nearest, the safest, and the loneliest spot in the neighbourhood of his home, where the blind man could inhale the air and bask in the light of heaven. Hitherto, thinking it sad for the child, he had never taken her with him; indeed, at the hour of his monotonous excursion she had generally been banished to bed. Now she was permitted to accompany him; and the old man and the infant would sit there side by side, as Age and Infancy rested side by side in the graves below. The first symptom of childlike interest and curiosity that Fanny betrayed was awakened by the affliction of her protector. One evening, as they thus sat, she made him explain what the desolation of blindness is. She seemed to comprehend him, though he did not seek to adapt his complaints to her understanding.

"Fanny knows," said she, touchingly; "for she, too, is blind here;" and she pressed her hands to her temples.

Notwithstanding her silence and strange ways, and although he could not see the exquisite loveliness which Nature, as in remorseful pity, had lavished on her outward form, Simon soon learned to love her better than he had ever loved yet, — for they most cold to the child are often dotards to the grandchild. For her even his avarice slept. Dainties never before known at his sparing board were ordered to tempt her appetite, toy-shops ransacked to amuse her indolence. He was long, however, before he could prevail on himself to fulfil his promise to Morton, and rob himself of her presence. At length, however, wearied with Mrs. Boxer's lamentations at her ignorance, and alarmed himself at some evidences of helplessness, which made him dread to think what her future might be when left alone in life, he placed her at a day-school in the suburb. Here Fanny, for a considerable time, justified the harshest assertions of her stupid-

ity. She could not even keep her eyes two minutes together on the page from which she was to learn the mysteries of reading; months passed before she mastered the alphabet, and, a month after, she had again forgot it, and the labour was renewed. The only thing in which she showed ability, if so it might be called, was in the use of the needle. The sisters of the convent had already taught her many pretty devices in this art; and when she found that at the school they were admired, that she was praised instead of blamed, her vanity was pleased, and she learned so readily all that they could teach in this not unprofitable accomplishment that Mrs. Boxer slyly and secretly turned her tasks to account, and made a weekly perquisite of the poor pupil's industry. Another faculty she possessed, in common with persons usually deficient, and with the lower species,—namely, a most accurate and faithful recollection of places. At first Mrs. Boxer had been duly sent morning, noon, and evening to take her to or bring her from the school; but this was so great a grievance to Simon's solitary superintendent, and Fanny coaxed the old man so endearingly to allow her to go and return alone, that the attendance, unwelcome to both, was waived. Fanny exulted in this liberty; and she never, in going or in returning, missed passing through the burial-ground, and gazing wistfully at the tomb from which she yet believed Morton would one day reappear. With his memory she cherished also that of her earlier and more guilty protector; but they were separate feelings, which she distinguished in her own way.

"Papa had given her up. She knew that he would not have sent her away, far over the great water, if he had meant to see Fanny again; but her brother was forced to leave her,—he would come to life one day, and then they should live together!"

One day, towards the end of autumn, as her schoolmistress, a good woman on the whole, but who had not yet had the wit to discover by what chords to tune the instrument over which so wearily she drew her unskilful hand,—one day, we say, the schoolmistress happened to be dressed for a christening

party to which she was invited in the suburb; and, accordingly, after the morning lessons, the pupils were to be dismissed to a holiday. As Fanny now came last, with the hopeless spelling-book, she stopped suddenly short, and her eyes rested with avidity upon a large bouquet of exotic flowers, with which the good lady had enlivened the centre of the parted kerchief, whose yellow gauze modestly veiled that tender section of female beauty which poets have likened to hills of snow,—a chilling simile! It was then autumn; and field and even garden flowers were growing rare.

"Will you give me one of those flowers?" said Fanny, dropping her book.

"One of these flowers, child! why?"

Fanny did not answer; but one of the elder and cleverer girls said,—

"Oh, she comes from France, you know, ma'am, and the Roman Catholics put flowers and ribbons and things over the graves; you recollect, ma'am, we were reading yesterday about Père-la-Chaise?"

"Well! what then?"

"And Miss Fanny will do any kind of work for us if we will give her flowers."

"My brother told me where to put them; but these pretty flowers, I never had any like them; *they* may bring him back again! I'll be so good if you'll give me one,—only one!"

"Will you learn your lesson if I do, Fanny?"

"Oh, yes! Wait a moment!"

And Fanny stole back to her desk, put the hateful book resolutely before her, pressed both hands tightly on her temples, — *Eureka!* the chord *was* touched; and Fanny marched in triumph through half a column of hostile double syllables!

From that day the schoolmistress knew how to stimulate her, and Fanny learned to read,—her path to knowledge thus literally strewn with flowers! Catherine, thy children were far off, and thy grave looked gay!

It naturally happened that those short and simple rhymes, often sacred, which are repeated in schools as helps to mem-

ory, made a part of her studies; and no sooner had the sound of verse struck upon her fancy than it seemed to confuse and agitate anew all her senses. It was like the music of some breeze, to which dance and tremble all the young leaves of a wild plant. Even when at the convent she had been fond of repeating the infant rhymes with which they had sought to lull or to amuse her, but now the taste was more strongly developed. She confounded, however, in meaningless and motley disorder the various snatches of song that came to her ear, weaving them together in some form which she understood, but which was jargon to all others; and often, as she went alone through the green lanes or the bustling streets, the passenger would turn in pity and fear to hear her half chant, half murmur, ditties that seemed to suit only a wandering and unsettled imagination. And as Mrs. Boxer, in her visits to the various shops in the suburb, took care to bemoan her hard fate in attending to a creature so evidently moon-stricken, it was no wonder that the manner and habits of the child, coupled with that strange predilection to haunt the burial-ground, which is not uncommon with persons of weak and disordered intellect, confirmed the character thus given to her.

So, as she tripped gayly and lightly along the thoroughfares, the children would draw aside from her path, and whisper with superstitious fear mingled with contempt, "It's the idiot girl!" Idiot! how much more of heaven's light was there in that cloud than in the rushlights that, flickering in sordid chambers, shed on dull things the dull ray, esteeming themselves as stars!

Months, years passed. Fanny was thirteen, when there dawned a new era to her existence. Mrs. Boxer had never got over her first grudge to Fanny. Her treatment of the poor girl was always harsh, and sometimes cruel; but Fanny did not complain, and as Mrs. Boxer's manner to her before Simon was invariably cringing and caressing, the old man never guessed the hardships his supposed grandchild underwent. There had been scandal some years back in the suburb about the relative connection of the master and the house-

keeper; and the flaunting dress of the latter, something bold in her regard, and certain whispers that her youth had not been vowed to Vesta, confirmed the suspicion. The only reason why we do not feel sure that the rumour was false is this, — Simon Gawtreys had been so hard on the early follies of his son! Certainly, at all events, the woman had exercised great influence over the miser before the arrival of Fanny, and she had done much to steel his selfishness against the ill-fated William; and, as certainly, she had fully calculated on succeeding to the savings, whatever they might be, of the miser, whenever Providence should be pleased to terminate his days. She knew that Simon had, many years back, made his will in her favour; she knew that he had not altered that will; she believed, therefore, that in spite of all his love for Fanny, he loved his gold so much more that he could not accustom himself to the thought of bequeathing it to hands too helpless to guard the treasure. This had in some measure reconciled the housekeeper to the intruder, — whom nevertheless, she hated as a dog hates another dog, not only for taking his bone but for looking at it.

But suddenly Simon fell ill. His age made it probable he would die. He took to his bed; his breathing grew fainter and fainter; he seemed dead. Fanny, all unconscious, sat by his bedside as usual, holding her breath not to waken him. Mrs. Boxer flew to the bureau; she unlocked it. She could not find the will; but she found three bags of bright old guineas. The sight charmed her. She tumbled them forth on the distained green cloth of the bureau, she began to count them; and at that moment, the old man, as if there were a secret magnetism between himself and the guineas, woke from his trance. His blindness saved him the pain, that might have been fatal, of seeing the unhallowed profanation; but he heard the chink of the metal. The very sound restored his strength. But the infirm are always cunning, — he breathed not a suspicion. "Mrs. Boxer," said he, faintly, "I think I could take some broth." Mrs. Boxer rose in great dismay, gently re-closed the bureau, and ran downstairs for the broth. Simon took the occasion to question Fanny; and

no sooner had he learned the operation of the heir-expectant than he bade the girl first lock the bureau and bring him the key, and next run to a lawyer (whose address he gave her), and fetch him instantly.

With a malignant smile the old man took the broth from his handmaid. "Poor Boxer, you are a disinterested creature," said he, feebly; "I think you will grieve when I go."

Mrs. Boxer sobbed, and before she had recovered, the lawyer entered. That day a new will was made; and the lawyer politely informed Mrs. Boxer that her services would be dispensed with the next morning, when he should bring a nurse to the house. Mrs. Boxer heard, and took her resolution. As soon as Simon again fell asleep, she crept into the room, led away Fanny, locked her up in her own chamber, returned, searched for the key of the bureau, which she found at last under Simon's pillow, possessed herself of all she could lay her hands on, and the next morning she had disappeared forever! Simon's loss was greater than might have been supposed; for, except a trifling sum in the savings bank, he, like many other misers, kept all he had in notes or specie under his own lock and key. His whole fortune, indeed, was far less than was supposed; for money does not make money unless it is put out to interest,—and the miser cheated himself. Such portion as was in bank-notes Mrs. Boxer probably had the prudence to destroy, for those numbers which Simon could remember were never traced; the gold, who could swear to? Except the pittance in the savings bank, and whatever might be the paltry worth of the house he rented, the father who had enriched the menial to exile the son was a beggar in his dotage. This news, however, was carefully concealed from him by the advice of the doctor, whom, on his own responsibility, the lawyer introduced, till he had recovered sufficiently to bear the shock without danger; and the delay naturally favoured Mrs. Boxer's escape.

Simon remained for some moments perfectly stunned and speechless when the news was broken to him. Fanny, in alarm at his increasing paleness, sprang to his breast. He

pushed her away. "Go, go, go, child," he said; "I can't feed you now. Leave me to starve."

"To starve!" said Fanny, wonderingly; and she stole away, and sat herself down as if in deep thought. She then crept up to the lawyer as he was about to leave the room, after exhausting his stock of commonplace consolation; and putting her hand in his, whispered, "I want to talk to you, — this way." She led him through the passage into the open air. "Tell me," she said, "when poor people try not to starve, don't they work?"

"My dear, yes."

"For rich people buy poor people's work?"

"Certainly, my dear; to be sure."

"Very well. Mrs. Boxer used to sell my work. Fanny will feed Grandpapa! Go and tell him never to say 'starve' again."

The good-natured lawyer was moved. "Can you work, indeed, my poor girl? Well, put on your bonnet, and come and talk to my wife."

And *that* was the new era in Fanny's existence! Her schooling was stopped; but now life schooled her. Necessity ripened her intellect. And many a hard eye moistened, as, seeing her glide with her little basket of fancy-work along the streets, still murmuring her happy and birdlike snatches of unconnected song, men and children alike said with respect, in which there was *now* no contempt, "It's the idiot girl who supports her blind grandfather!"

They called her idiot still!

BOOK IV.

Hin zu einem großen Meere
Trieb mich seiner Wellen Spiel;
Vor mir liegt's in weiter Leere,
Näher bin ich nicht dem Ziel.

SCHILLER: *Der Pilgrim.*

CHAPTER I.

O THAT sweet gleam of sunshine on the lake!

WILSON: *City of the Plague.*

IF, reader, you have ever looked through a solar microscope at the monsters in a drop of water, perhaps you have wondered to yourself how things so terrible have been hitherto unknown to you, you have felt a loathing at the limpid element you hitherto deemed so pure, you have half fancied that you would cease to be a water-drinker; yet the next day you have forgotten the grim life that started before you, with its countless shapes, in that teeming globule, and if so tempted by your thirst, you have not shrunk from the lying crystal, although myriads of the horrible Unseen are mangling, devouring, gorging each other in the liquid you so tranquilly imbibe. So is it with that ancestral and master element called Life. Lapped in your sleek comforts, and lolling on the sofa of your patent conscience, when, perhaps for the first time, you look through the glass of science upon one ghastly globule in the waters that heave around, that fill up with their succulence the pores of earth, that moisten every atom subject to your eyes or handled by your touch, you are startled and dismayed; you say, mentally, "Can such things be? I

never dreamed of this before! I thought what was invisible to me was non-existent in itself, — I will remember this dread experiment." The next day the experiment is forgotten. The Chemist may purify the Globule, — can Science make pure the World?

Turn we now to the pleasant surface, seen in the whole, broad and fair to the common eye. Who would judge well of God's great designs, if he could look on no drop pendent from the rose-tree or sparkling in the sun without the help of his solar microscope?

It is ten years after the night on which William Gawtreys perished. I transport you, reader, to the fairest scenes in England, — scenes consecrated by the only true pastoral poetry we have known to Contemplation and Repose.

Autumn had begun to tinge the foliage on the banks of Winandermere. It had been a summer of unusual warmth and beauty; and if that year you had visited the English lakes, you might, from time to time, amidst the groups of happy idlers you encountered, have singled out two persons for interest, or, perhaps, for envy, — two who might have seemed to you in peculiar harmony with those serene and soft retreats, both young, both beautiful. Lovers you would have guessed them to be; but such lovers as Fletcher might have placed under the care of his "Holy Shepherdess," — forms that might have reclined by —

"The virtuous well, about whose flowery banks
The nimble-footed fairies dance their rounds
By the pale moonshine.

For in the love of those persons there seemed a purity and innocence that suited well their youth and the character of their beauty. Perhaps, indeed, on the girl's side, love sprung rather from those affections which the spring of life throws upward to the surface, as the spring of earth does its flowers, than from that concentrated and deep absorption of self in self, which alone promises endurance and devotion, and of which first love, or rather the first fancy, is often less susceptible than that which grows out of the more thoughtful fond-

ness of maturer years. Yet he, the lover, was of so rare and singular a beauty that he might well seem calculated to awaken to the utmost the love which wins the heart through the eyes.

But to begin at the beginning. A lady of fashion had, in the autumn previous to the year in which our narrative re-opens, taken, with her daughter, a girl then of about eighteen, the tour of the English lakes. Charmed by the beauty of Winandermere, and finding one of the most commodious villas on its banks to be let, they had remained there all the winter. In the early spring a severe illness had seized the elder lady, and finding herself, as she slowly recovered, unfit for the gayeties of a London season, nor unwilling, perhaps, — for she had been a beauty in her day, — to postpone for another year the *début* of her daughter, she had continued her sojourn, with short intervals of absence, for a whole year. Her husband, a busy man of the world, with occupation in London and fine estates in the country, joined them only occasionally, glad to escape the still beauty of landscapes which brought him no rental, and therefore afforded no charm to his eye.

In the first month of their arrival at Winandermere, the mother and daughter had made an eventful acquaintance in the following manner:

One evening, as they were walking on their lawn, which sloped to the lake, they heard the sound of a flute, played with a skill so exquisite as to draw them, surprised and spell-bound, to the banks. The musician was a young man in a boat, which he had moored beneath the trees of their demesne. He was alone, or, rather, he had one companion in a large Newfoundland dog, that sat watchful at the helm of the boat, and appeared to enjoy the music as much as his master. As the ladies approached the spot, the dog growled, and the young man ceased, though without seeing the fair causes of his companion's displeasure. The sun, then setting, shone full on his countenance as he looked round; and that countenance was one that might have haunted the nymphs of Delos, — the face of Apollo, not as the hero but

the shepherd, not of the bow but of the lute, not the Python-slayer but the young dreamer by shady places, — he whom the sculptor has portrayed leaning idly against the tree, — the boy-god whose home is yet on earth, and to whom the Oracle and the Spheres are still unknown.

At that moment the dog leaped from the boat, and the elder lady uttered a faint cry of alarm, which, directing the attention of the musician, brought him also ashore. He called off his dog, and apologized, with a not ungraceful mixture of diffidence and ease, for his intrusion. He was not aware the place was inhabited, it was a favourite haunt of his, he lived near. The elder lady was pleased with his address and struck with his appearance. There was, indeed, in his manner that indefinable charm which is more attractive than mere personal appearance, and which can never be imitated or acquired. They parted, however, without establishing any formal acquaintance. A few days after, they met at dinner at a neighbouring house, and were introduced by name. That of the young man seemed strange to the ladies; not so theirs to him. He turned pale when he heard it, and remained silent and aloof the rest of the evening. They met again, and often, and for some weeks — nay, even for months — he appeared to avoid as much as possible the acquaintance so auspiciously begun; but by little and little, the beauty of the younger lady seemed to gain ground on his diffidence or repugnance. Excursions among the neighbouring mountains threw them together, and at last he fairly surrendered himself to the charm he had at first determined to resist.

This young man lived on the opposite side of the lake, in a quiet household, of which he was the idol. His life had been one of almost monastic purity and repose; his tastes were accomplished, his character seemed soft and gentle; but beneath that calm exterior, flashes of passion — the nature of the poet, ardent and sensitive — would break forth at times. He had scarcely ever, since his earliest childhood, quitted those retreats; he knew nothing of the world, except in books, — books of poetry and romance. Those with whom he lived — his relations, an old bachelor, and the old bache-

lor's sisters, old maids — seemed equally innocent and inexperienced. It was a family whom the rich respected and the poor loved, — inoffensive, charitable, and well off. To whatever their easy fortune might be, he appeared the heir. The name of this young man was Charles Spencer; the ladies were Mrs. Beaufort, and Camilla her daughter.

Mrs. Beaufort, though a shrewd woman, did not at first perceive any danger in the growing intimacy between Camilla and the younger Spencer. Her daughter was not her favourite, — not the object of her one thought or ambition. Her whole heart and soul were wrapped in her son Arthur, who lived principally abroad. Clever enough to be considered capable, when he pleased, of achieving distinction, good-looking enough to be thought handsome by all who were on the *qui vive* for an advantageous match, good-natured enough to be popular with the society in which he lived, scattering to and fro money without limit, — Arthur Beaufort, at the age of thirty, had established one of those brilliant and evanescent reputations, which for a few years reward the ambition of the fine gentleman. It was precisely the reputation that the mother could appreciate, and which even the more saving father secretly admired, while, ever respectable in phrase, Mr. Robert Beaufort seemed openly to regret it. This son was, I say, everything to them; they cared little in comparison for their daughter. How could a daughter keep up the proud name of Beaufort? However well she might marry, it was another house, not theirs, which her graces and beauty would adorn. Moreover, the better she might marry the greater her dowry would naturally be, — the dowry, to go out of the family! And Arthur, poor fellow! was so extravagant, that really he would want every sixpence. Such was the reasoning of the father. The mother reasoned less upon the matter. Mrs. Beaufort, faded and meagre, in blonde and cashmere, was jealous of the charms of her daughter; and she herself, growing sentimental and lachrymose as she advanced in life, as silly women often do, had convinced herself that Camilla was a girl of no feeling.

Miss Beaufort was, indeed, of a character singularly calm

and placid; it was the character that charms men in proportion, perhaps, to their own strength and passion. She had been rigidly brought up; her affections had been very early chilled and subdued; they moved, therefore, now, with ease in the serene path of her duties. She held her parents, especially her father, in reverential fear, and never dreamed of the possibility of resisting one of their wishes, much less their commands. Pious, kind, gentle, of a fine and never ruffled temper, Camilla, an admirable daughter, was likely to make no less admirable a wife; you might depend on her principles, if ever you could doubt her affection. Few girls were more calculated to inspire love. You would scarcely wonder at any folly, any madness, which even a wise man might commit for her sake. This did not depend on her beauty alone, though she was extremely lovely rather than handsome, and of that style of loveliness which is universally fascinating: the figure, especially as to the arms, throat, and bust, was exquisite; the mouth dimpled; the teeth dazzling; the eyes of that *velvet* softness which to look on is to love. But her charm was in a certain prettiness of manner, an exceeding innocence, mixed with the most captivating, because unconscious, coquetry. With all this, there was a freshness, a joy, a virgin and bewitching candour in her voice, her laugh, — you might almost say in her very movements. Such was Camilla Beaufort at that age. Such she seemed to others. To her parents she was only a great girl rather in the way, — to Mrs. Beaufort a rival, to Mr. Beaufort an encumbrance on the property.

CHAPTER II.

THE moon

Saddening the solemn night, yet with that sadness
Mingling the breath of undisturbed Peace.

WILSON: *City of the Plague.*

Tell me his fate.

Say that he lives, or say that he is dead:
But tell me, tell me!

I see him not, some cloud envelops him. — *Ibid.*

ONE day, nearly a year after their first introduction, as with a party of friends Camilla and Charles Spencer were riding through those wild and romantic scenes which lie between the sunny Winandermere and the dark and sullen Wastwater, their conversation fell on topics more personal than it had hitherto done, for as yet, if they felt love, they had never spoken of it.

The narrowness of the path allowed only two to ride abreast, and the two to whom I confine my description were the last of the little band.

"How I wish Arthur were here!" said Camilla; "I am sure you would like him."

"Are you? He lives much in the world, — the world of which I know nothing. Are we then characters to suit each other?"

"He is the kindest, the best of human beings!" said Camilla, rather evasively, but with more warmth than usually dwelt in her soft and low voice.

"Is he so kind?" returned Spencer, musingly. "Well, it may be so. And who would not be kind to you? Ah, it is a beautiful connection, — that of brother and sister! I never had a sister!"

"Have you then a brother?" asked Camilla, in some surprise, and turning her ingenuous eyes full on her companion.

Spencer's colour rose, — rose to his temples. His voice trembled as he answered, "No, no brother!" then, speaking in a rapid and hurried tone, he continued, "My life has been a strange and lonely one. I am an orphan. I have mixed with few of my own age; my boyhood and youth have been spent in these scenes; my education such as Nature and books could bestow, with scarcely any guide or tutor save my guardian, the dear old man! Thus the world, the stir of cities, ambition, enterprise, — all seem to me as things belonging to a distant land to which I shall never wander. Yet I have had my dreams, Miss Beaufort, dreams of which these solitudes still form a part, but solitudes not unshared; and lately I have thought that those dreams might be prophetic. And you — do *you* love the world?"

"I, like you, have scarcely tried it," said Camilla, with a sweet laugh; "but I love the country better, — oh! far better than what little I have seen of towns. But for you," she continued, with a charming hesitation, "a man is so different from us, — for you to shrink from the world, you, so young and with talents too — nay, it is true! — it seems to me strange."

"It may be so; but I cannot tell you what feelings of dread, what vague forebodings of terror seize me if I carry my thoughts beyond these retreats. Perhaps my good guardian —"

"Your uncle?" interrupted Camilla.

"Ay, my uncle, may have contributed to engender feelings, as you say, strange at my age; but still —"

"Still what!"

"My earlier childhood," continued Spencer, breathing hard and turning pale, "was not spent in the happy home I have now; it was passed in a premature ordeal of suffering and pain. Its recollections have left a dark shadow on my mind, and under that shadow lies every thought that points towards the troublous and labouring career of other men. But," he resumed after a pause, and in a deep, earnest, almost solemn voice, — "but, after all, is this cowardice or wisdom? I find no monotony, no tedium in this quiet life. Is there not a certain morality, a certain religion, in the spirit of a secluded

and country existence? In it we do not know the evil passions which ambition and strife are said to arouse. I never feel jealous or envious of other men; I never know what it is to hate; my boat, my horse, our garden, music, books, and, if I may dare to say so, the solemn gladness that comes from the hopes of another life, — these fill up every hour with thoughts and pursuits, peaceful, happy, and without a cloud, till of late, when — when — ”

“When what?” said Camilla, innocently.

“When I have longed, but did not dare to ask another, if to share such a lot would content her!”

He bent, as he spoke, his soft blue eyes full upon the blushing face of her whom he addressed, and Camilla half smiled and half sighed.

“Our companions are far before us,” said she, turning away her face, “and see, the road is now smooth.” She quickened her horse’s pace as she said this; and Spencer, too new to women to interpret favourably her evasion of his words and looks, fell into a profound silence which lasted during the rest of their excursion.

As towards the decline of day he bent his solitary way home, emotions and passions to which his life had hitherto been a stranger, and which, alas! he had vainly imagined a life so tranquil would everlastingly restrain, swelled his heart.

“She does not love me,” he muttered, half aloud; “she will leave me, and what then will all the beauty of the landscape seem in my eyes? And how dare I look up to her? Even if her cold, vain mother, her father, the man, they say, of forms and scruples, were to consent, would they not question closely of my true birth and origin? And if the one blot were overlooked, is there no other? His early habits and vices, *his!* — a brother’s — his unknown career terminating at any day, perhaps, in shame, in crime, in exposure, in the gibbet, — will they overlook this?” As he spoke, he groaned aloud, and as if impatient to escape himself, spurred on his horse and rested not till he reached the belt of trim and sober evergreens that surrounded his hitherto happy home.

Leaving his horse to find its way to the stables, the young

man passed through rooms which he found deserted to the lawn on the other side, which sloped to the smooth waters of the lake.

Here, seated under the one large tree that formed the pride of the lawn, over which it cast its shadow broad and far, he perceived his guardian poring idly over an oft-read book, one of those books of which literary dreamers are apt to grow fanatically fond, — books by the old English writers, full of phrases and conceits half quaint and half sublime, interspersed with praises of the country, imbued with a poetical rather than orthodox religion, and adorned with a strange mixture of monastic learning and aphorisms collected from the weary experience of actual life.

To the left, by a greenhouse, built between the house and the lake, might be seen the white dress and lean form of the eldest spinster sister, to whom the care of the flowers — for she had been early crossed in love — was consigned; at a little distance from her, the other two were seated at work, and conversing in whispers, not to disturb their studious brother, no doubt upon the nephew, who was their all in all. It was the calmest hour of eve, and the quiet of the several forms, their simple and harmless occupations, — if occupations they might be called, — the breathless foliage rich in the depth of summer; behind, the old-fashioned house, unpretending, not mean, its open doors and windows giving glimpses of the comfortable repose within; before, the lake, without a ripple and catching the gleam of the sunset clouds, — all made a picture of that complete tranquillity and stillness, which sometimes soothes and sometimes saddens us, according as we are in the temper to woo CONTENT.

The young man glided to his guardian and touched his shoulder. "Sir, may I speak to you? Hush! *they* need not see us now! it is only you I would speak with."

The elder Spencer rose; and with his book still in his hand, moved side by side with his nephew under the shadow of the tree and towards a walk to the right, which led for a short distance along the margin of the lake, backed by the interlaced boughs of a thick copse.

"Sir," said the young man, speaking first, and with a visible effort, "your cautions have been in vain! I love this girl, this daughter of the haughty Beauforts! I love her, — better than life I love her!"

"My poor boy," said the uncle, tenderly, and with a simple fondness passing his arm over the speaker's shoulder, "do not think I can chide you; I know what it is to love in vain!"

"In vain! but why in vain?" exclaimed the younger Spencer, with a vehemence that had in it something of both agony and fierceness. "She may love me, she shall love me!" and almost for the first time in his life, the proud consciousness of his rare gifts of person spoke in his kindled eye and dilated stature. "Do they not say that Nature has been favourable to me? What rival have I here? Is she not young? And" (sinking his voice till it almost breathed like music) "is not love contagious?"

"I do not doubt that she may love you, — who would not? But — but — the parents, will they ever consent?"

"Nay!" answered the lover, as with that inconsistency common to passion, he now argued stubbornly against those fears in another to which he had just before yielded in himself, — "nay! after all, am I not of their own blood? Do I not come from the elder branch? Was I not reared in equal luxury and with higher hopes? And my mother — my poor mother — did she not to the last maintain our birthright, her own honour? Has not accident or law unjustly stripped us of our true station? Is it not for us to forgive spoliation? Am I not, in fact, the person who descends, who forgets the wrongs of the dead, the heritage of the living?"

The young man had never yet assumed this tone, had never yet shown that he looked back to the history connected with his birth with the feelings of resentment and the remembrance of wrong. It was a tone contrary to his habitual calm and contentment. It struck forcibly on his listener, and the elder Spencer was silent for some moments before he replied, "If you feel thus (and it is natural), you have yet stronger reason to struggle against this unhappy affection."

"I have been conscious of that, sir," replied the young man,

mournfully. "I *have* struggled! and I say again it is in vain! I turn, then, to face the obstacles! My birth — let us suppose that the Beauforts overlook it. Did you not tell me that Mr. Beaufort wrote to inform you of the abrupt and intemperate visit of my brother, of his determination never to forgive it? I think I remember something of this years ago."

"It is true!" said the guardian; "and the conduct of that brother is, in fact, the true cause why you never ought to reassume your proper name; never to divulge it, even to the family with whom you connect yourself by marriage; but, above all, to the Beauforts, who for that cause, if that cause alone, would reject your suit."

The young man groaned, placed one hand before his eyes, and with the other grasped his guardian's arm convulsively, as if to check him from proceeding further; but the good man, not divining his meaning, and absorbed in his subject, went on, irritating the wound he had touched.

"Reflect! Your brother in boyhood, in the dying hours of his mother, scarcely saved from the crime of a thief, flying from a friendly pursuit with a notorious reprobate; afterwards implicated in some discreditable transaction about a horse, rejecting all, every hand that could save him, clinging by choice to the lowest companions and the meanest habits, disappearing from the country, and last seen, ten years ago, — the beard not yet on his chin, — with that same reprobate of whom I have spoken, in Paris, a day or so only before his companion, a coiner, a murderer, fell by the hands of the police! You remember that when, in your seventeenth year, you evinced some desire to retake your name — nay, even to refund that guilty brother — I placed before you, as a sad and terrible duty, the newspaper that contained the particulars of the death and the former adventures of that wretched accomplice, the notorious Gawtrey; and telling you that Mr. Beaufort had long since written to inform me that his own son and Lord Lilburne had seen your brother in company with the miscreant just before his fate, — nay, was, in all probability, the very youth described in the account as found in his chamber and escaping the pursuit, — I asked you if you would now

venture to leave that disguise, that shelter under which you would forever be safe from the opprobrium of the world, from the shame that, sooner or later, your brother must bring upon your name!"

"It is true! it is true!" said the pretended nephew, in a tone of great anguish, and with trembling lips which the blood had forsaken. "Horrible to look either to his past or his future! But—but—we have heard of him no more—no one ever has learned his fate. Perhaps—perhaps" (and he seemed to breathe more freely)—"*my brother is no more!*"

And poor Catherine! and poor Philip! had it come to this? Did the one brother feel a sentiment of release, of joy, in conjecturing the death—perhaps the death of violence and shame—of his fellow-orphan? Mr. Spencer shook his head doubtfully, but made no reply. The young man sighed heavily and strode on for several paces in advance of his protector, then, turning back, he laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Sir," he said in a low voice and with downcast eyes, "you are right: this disguise, this false name, must be forever borne! Why need the Beauforts, then, ever know who and what I am? Why not as your nephew—nephew to one so respected and exemplary—proffer my claims and plead my cause?"

"They are proud—so it is said—and worldly. You know my family was in trade—still—but—" and here Mr. Spencer broke off from a tone of doubt into that of despondency, "but, recollect, though Mrs. Beaufort may not remember the circumstance, both her husband and her son have seen me, have known my name. Will they not suspect, when once introduced to you, the stratagem that has been adopted? Nay, has it not been from that very fear that you have wished me to shun the acquaintance of the family? Both Mr. Beaufort and Arthur saw you in childhood, and their suspicion once aroused, they may recognize you at once; your features are developed, but not altogether changed. Come, come! my adopted, my dear son, shake off this fantasy betimes. Let us change the scene; I will travel with you, read with you, go where—"

"Sir! sir!" exclaimed the lover, smiting his breast, "you are ever kind, compassionate, generous; but do not, do not rob me of hope. I have never — thanks to you — felt, save in a momentary dejection, the curse of my birth. Now how heavily it falls! Where shall I look for comfort?"

As he spoke, the sound of a bell broke over the translucent air and the slumbering lake: it was the bell that every eve and morn summoned that innocent and pious family to prayer. The old man's face changed as he heard it, — changed from its customary indolent, absent, listless aspect into an expression of dignity, even of animation.

"Hark!" he said, pointing upwards; "hark! it chides you. Who shall say, '*Where* shall I look for comfort' while God is in the heavens?"

The young man, habituated to the faith and observance of religion till they had pervaded his whole nature, bowed his head in rebuke; a few tears stole from his eyes.

"You are right, *Father*," he said tenderly, giving emphasis to the deserved and endearing name. "I am comforted already!"

So, side by side, silently and noiselessly, the young and the old man glided back to the house. When they gained the quiet room in which the family usually assembled, the sisters and servants were already gathered round the table. They knelt as the loiterers entered. It was the wonted duty of the younger Spencer to read the prayers; and as he now did so, his graceful countenance more hushed, his sweet voice more earnest than usual, in its accents, who that heard could have deemed the heart within convulsed by such stormy passions? Or was it not in that hour — that solemn commune — soothed from its woe? O beneficent Creator! Thou who inspirest all the tribes of earth with the *desire to pray*, hast Thou not, in that divinest instinct, bestowed on us the happiest of Thy gifts?

CHAPTER III.

Bertram. I mean the business is not ended, as fearing to hear of it hereafter.

1st Soldier. Do you know this Captain Dumain?

All's Well that Ends Well.

ONE evening, some weeks after the date of the last chapter, Mr. Robert Beaufort sat alone in his house in Berkeley Square. He had arrived that morning from Beaufort Court on his way to Winandermere, to which he was summoned by a letter from his wife. That year was an agitated and eventful epoch in England; and Mr. Beaufort had recently gone through the bustle of an election,—not, indeed, contested; for his popularity and his property defied all rivalry in his own county.

The rich man had just dined, and was seated in lazy enjoyment by the side of the fire, which he had had lighted, less for the warmth—though it was then September—than for the companionship, engaged in finishing his madeira, and, with half-closed eyes, munching his devilled biscuits. “I am sure,” he soliloquized while thus employed, “I don’t know exactly what to do. My wife ought to decide matters where the *girl* is concerned; a son is another affair—that’s the use of a wife. Humph!”

“Sir,” said a fat servant, opening the door, “a gentleman wishes to see you upon very particular business.”

“Business at this hour! Tell him to go to Mr. Blackwell.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Stay! perhaps he is a constituent, Simmons. Ask him if he belongs to the county.”

“Yes, sir.”

“A great estate is a great plague,” muttered Mr. Beaufort; “so is a great constituency. It is pleasanter, after all, to be

in the House of Lords. I suppose I could if I wished; but then one must rat,—that's a bore. I will consult Lilburne. Humph!" The servant re-appeared.

"Sir, he says he does belong to the county."

"Show him in! What sort of a person?"

"A sort of gentleman, sir; that is," continued the butler, mindful of five shillings just slipped within his palm by the stranger, "quite *the* gentleman."

"More wine, then; stir up the fire."

In a few moments the visitor was ushered into the apartment. He was a man between fifty and sixty, but still aiming at the appearance of youth. His dress evinced military pretensions,—consisting of a blue coat, buttoned up to the chin, a black stock, loose trousers of the fashion called cosacks, and brass spurs. He wore a wig, of great luxuriance in curl and rich auburn in hue; with large whiskers of the same colour slightly tinged with gray at the roots. By the imperfect light of the room it was not perceptible that the clothes were somewhat threadbare, and that the boots, cracked at the side, admitted glimpses of no very white hosiery within. Mr. Beaufort, reluctantly rising from his repose and gladly sinking back to it, motioned to a chair, and put on a doleful and doubtful semi-smile of welcome. The servant placed the wine and glasses before the stranger; the host and visitor were alone.

"So, sir," said Mr. Beaufort, languidly, "you are from —shire; I suppose about the canal,—may I offer you a glass of wine?"

"Most hauppy, sir,—your health!" and the stranger, with evident satisfaction, tossed off a bumper to so complimentary a toast.

"About the canal?" repeated Mr. Beaufort.

"No, sir, no! You parliament gentlemen must have a vaust deal of trouble on your haunds; very foine property I understaund yours is, sir. Sir, allow me to drink the health of your good lady!"

"I thank you, Mr. — Mr. — what did you say your name was? I beg you a thousand pardons."

"No offaunce in the least, sir; no ceremony with me. This is perticler good madeira!"

"May I ask how I can serve you?" said Mr. Beaufort, struggling between the sense of annoyance and the fear to be uncivil. "And pray, had I the honour of your vote in the last election?"

"No, sir, no! It's mauny years since I have been in your part of the world, though I was born there."

"Then I don't exactly see —" began Mr. Beaufort, and stopped with dignity.

"Why I call on you," put in the stranger, tapping his boots with his cane; and then recognizing the rents, he thrust both feet under the table.

"I don't say that; but at this hour I am seldom at leisure — not but what I am always at the service of a constituent, that is, a *voter*! Mr. — I beg your pardon, I did not catch your name."

"Sir," said the stranger, helping himself to a third glass of wine; "here's a health to your young folk! And now to business." Here the visitor, drawing his chair nearer to his host, assuming a more grave aspect, and dropping something of his stilted pronunciation, continued, "You had a brother?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Beaufort, with a very changed countenance.

"And that brother had a wife!"

Had a cannon gone off in the ear of Mr. Robert Beaufort, it could not have shocked or stunned him more than that simple word with which his companion closed his sentence. He fell back in his chair, his lips apart, his eyes fixed on the stranger. He sought to speak, but his tongue clove to his mouth.

"That wife had two sons, born in wedlock!"

"It is false!" cried Mr. Beaufort, finding a voice at length, and springing to his feet. "And who are you, sir? and what do you mean by —"

"Hush!" said the stranger, perfectly unconcerned, and regaining the dignity of his *haw-haw* enunciation, "better not let the servants hear auntything. For my pawt, I think ser-

vants have the longest pair of ears of any persons, not excepting jauckasses; their ears stretch from the pauntry to the parlour. Hush, sir! Peticler good madeira, this!"

"Sir," said Mr. Beaufort, struggling to preserve, or rather recover, his temper, "your conduct is exceedingly strange; but allow me to say that you are wholly misinformed. My brother never did marry; and if you have anything to say on behalf of those young men — his natural sons — I refer you to my solicitor, Mr. Blackwell, of Lincoln's Inn. I wish you a good evening."

"Sir, the same to you. I won't trouble you any further; it was only out of kindness I called,— I am not used to be treated so. Sir, I am in his Majesty's service; sir, you will find that the witness of the marriage is forthcoming; you will think of me then, and perhaps be sorry. But I've done. 'Your most obedient humble, sir!'" And the stranger, with a flourish of his hand, turned to the door.

At the sight of this determination on the part of his strange guest, a cold, uneasy, vague presentiment seized Mr. Beaufort. There, not flashed, but rather froze, across him the recollection of his brother's emphatic but disbelieved assurances, of Catherine's obstinate assertion of her son's alleged rights, — rights which her lawsuit, undertaken on her own behalf, had not compromised. A fresh lawsuit might be instituted by the son, and the evidence which had been wanting in the former suit might be found at last. With this remembrance and these reflections came a horrible train of shadowy fears, — witnesses, verdict, surrender, spoliation, arrears, ruin!

The man, who had gained the door, turned back and looked at him with a complacent, half-triumphant leer upon his impudent, reckless face.

"Sir," then said Mr. Beaufort, mildly, "I repeat that you had better see Mr. Blackwell."

The tempter saw his triumph. "I have a secret to communicate which it is best for you to keep snug. How many people do you wish me to see about it? Come, sir, there is no need of a lawyer; or if you think so, tell him yourself. Now or never, Mr. Beaufort."

"I can have no objection to hear anything you have to say,

sir," said the rich man, yet more mildly than before; and then added, with a forced smile, "though my rights are already too confirmed to admit of a doubt."

Without heeding the last assertion, the stranger coolly walked back, resumed his seat, and, placing both arms on the table and looking Mr. Beaufort full in the face, thus proceeded,—

"Sir, of the marriage between Philip Beaufort and Catherine Morton there were two witnesses: the one is dead, the other went abroad. The last is alive still!"

"If so," said Mr. Beaufort, who, not naturally deficient in cunning and sense, felt every faculty now prodigiously sharpened, and was resolved to know the precise grounds for alarm,—"if so, why did not the man—it was a servant, sir, a man-servant, whom Mrs. Morton pretended to rely on—appear on the trial?"

"Because, I say, he was abroad and could not be found; or the search after him miscarried, from clumsy management and a lack of the rhino."

"Hum!" said Mr. Beaufort, "one witness—*one* witness, observe, there *is* only one!—does not alarm me much. It is not what a man deposes,—it is what a jury believe, sir! Moreover, what has become of the young men? They have never been heard of for years. They are probably dead; if so I am heir-at-law!"

"I know where one of them is to be found at all events."

"The elder,—Philip?" asked Mr. Beaufort, anxiously, and with a fearful remembrance of the energetic and vehement character prematurely exhibited by his nephew.

"Pawdon me! I need not answer that question."

"Sir! a lawsuit of this nature, against one in possession, is very doubtful, and," added the rich man, drawing himself up,— "and, perhaps very expensive!"

"The young man I speak of does not want friends who will not grudge the money."

"Sir!" said Mr. Beaufort, rising and placing his back to the fire,— "sir! what is your object in this communication? Do you come on the part of the young man to propose a compromise? If so, be plain!"

"I come on my own pawt. It rests with you to say if the young men shall never know it!"

"And what do you want?"

"Five hundred a year as long as the secret is kept."

"And how can you prove that there is a secret, after all?"

"By producing the witness if you wish."

"Will he go halves in the £500 a year?" asked Mr. Beaufort, artfully.

"That is moy affair, sir," replied the stranger.

"What you say," resumed Mr. Beaufort, "is so extraordinary, so unexpected, and still to me seems so improbable, that I must have time to consider. If you will call on me in a week and produce your facts, I will give you my answer. I am not the man, sir, to wish to keep any one out of his true rights, but I will not yield, on the other hand, to imposture."

"If you don't want to keep them out of their rights, I'd best go and tell my young gentlemen," said the stranger, with cool impudence.

"I tell you I must have time," repeated Beaufort, disconcerted. "Besides, I have not myself alone to look to, sir," he added, with dignified emphasis,— "I am a father!"

"This day week I will call on you again. Good evening, Mr. Beaufort!" And the man stretched out his hand with an air of amicable condescension.

The respectable Mr. Beaufort changed colour, hesitated, and finally suffered two fingers to be enticed into the grasp of the visitor, whom he ardently wished at that bourne whence no visitor returns.

The stranger smiled, stalked to the door, laid his finger on his lip, winked knowingly, and vanished, leaving Mr. Beaufort a prey to such feelings of uneasiness, dread, and terror as may be experienced by a man whom, on some inch or two of slippery rock, the tides have suddenly surrounded.

He remained perfectly still for some moments; and then glancing round the dim and spacious room, his eyes took in all the evidences of luxury and wealth which it betrayed. Above the huge sideboard, that on festive days groaned beneath the hoarded weight of the silver heirlooms of the Beauforts, hung,

in its gilded frame, a large picture of the family seat, with the stately porticos,—the noble park, the groups of deer; and around the wall, interspersed here and there with ancestral portraits of knight and dame, long since gathered to their rest, were placed masterpieces of the Italian and Flemish art, which generation after generation had slowly accumulated, till the Beaufort Collection had become the theme of connoisseurs and the study of young genius.

The still room, the dumb pictures, even the heavy side-board, seemed to gain voice, and speak to him audibly. He thrust his hand into the folds of his waistcoat, and gripped his own flesh convulsively; then, striding to and fro the apartment, he endeavoured to re-collect his thoughts.

"I dare not consult Mrs. Beaufort," he muttered; "no, no,—she is a fool! Besides, she's not in the way. No time to lose! I will go to Lilburne."

Scarce had that thought crossed him than he hastened to put it into execution. He rang for his hat and gloves, and sallied out on foot to Lord Lilburne's house in Park Lane,—the distance was short, and impatience has long strides.

He knew Lord Lilburne was in town, for that personage loved London for its own sake; and even in September he would have said with the old Duke of Queensberry, when some one observed that London was very empty, "Yes; but it is fuller than the country."

Mr. Beaufort found Lord Lilburne reclined on a sofa by the open window of his drawing-room, beyond which the early stars shone upon the glimmering trees and silver turf of the deserted park. Unlike the simple dessert of his respectable brother-in-law, the costliest fruits, the richest wines of France, graced the small table placed beside his sofa; and as the starch man of forms and method entered the room at one door, a rustling silk that vanished through the aperture of another seemed to betray tokens of a *tête-à-tête*, probably more agreeable to Lilburne than the one with which only our narrative is concerned.

It would have been a curious study for such men as love to gaze upon the dark and wily features of human character to

have watched the contrast between the reciter and the listener, as Beaufort, with much circumlocution, much affected disdain, and real anxiety, narrated the singular and ominous conversation between himself and his visitor.

The servant, in introducing Mr. Beaufort, had added to the light of the room; and the candles shone full on the face and form of Mr. Beaufort. All about that gentleman was so completely in unison with the world's forms and seemings, that there was something moral in the very sight of him! Since his accession of fortune he had grown less pale and less thin; the angles in his figure were filled up. On his brow there was no trace of younger passion. No able vice had ever sharpened the expression, no exhausting vice ever deepened the lines. He was the *beau-ideal* of a county member,—so sleek, so staid, so business-like; yet so clean, so neat, so much the gentleman. And now there was a kind of pathos in his gray hairs, his nervous smile, his agitated hands, his quick and uneasy transition of posture, the tremble of his voice. He would have appeared to those who saw but heard not The Good Man in trouble. Cold, motionless, speechless, seemingly apathetic, but in truth observant, still reclined on the sofa, his head thrown back, but one eye fixed on his companion, his hands clasped before him, Lord Lilburne listened; and in that repose, about his face, even about his person, might be read the history of how different a life and character! What native acuteness in the stealthy eye! What hardened resolve in the full nostril and firm lips! What sardonic contempt for all things in the intricate lines about the mouth! What animal enjoyment of all things so despised in that delicate nervous system, which, combined with original vigour of constitution, yet betrayed itself in the veins on the hands and temples, the occasional quiver of the upper lip! His was the frame above all others the most alive to pleasure,—deep-chested, compact, sinewy, but thin to leanness, delicate in its texture and extremities almost to effeminacy. The indifference of the posture, the very habit of the dress,—not slovenly, indeed, but easy, loose, careless,—seemed to speak of the man's manner of thought and life, his profound disdain of externals.

Not till Beaufort had concluded did Lord Lilburne change his position or open his lips; and then, turning to his brother-in-law his calm face, he said dryly,—

"I always thought your brother had married that woman; he was the sort of man to do it. Besides, why should she have gone to law without a vestige of proof, unless she was convinced of her rights? Imposture never proceeds without some evidence; innocence, like a fool as it is, fancies it has only to speak to be believed. But there is no cause for alarm."

"No cause! And yet you think there was a marriage."

"It is quite clear," continued Lilburne, without heeding this interruption, "that the man, whatever his evidence, has not got sufficient proofs. If he had, he would go to the young men rather than you. It is evident that they would promise infinitely larger rewards than he could expect from yourself. Men are always more generous with what they expect than with what they have. All rogues know this. 'Tis the way Jews and usurers thrive upon heirs rather than possessors; 'tis the philosophy of *post-obits*. I dare say the man has found out the real witness of the marriage, but ascertained also that the testimony of that witness would not suffice to dispossess you. He might be discredited,—rich men have a way sometimes of discrediting poor witnesses. Mind, he says nothing of the lost copy of the register,—whatever may be the value of that document, which I am not lawyer enough to say,—of any letters of your brother avowing the marriage. Consider, the register itself is destroyed, the clergyman dead. Pooh! make yourself easy."

"True," said Mr. Beaufort, much comforted; "what a memory you have!"

"Naturally. Your wife is my sister—I hate poor relations—and I was therefore much interested in your accession and your lawsuit. No, you may feel at rest on this matter, so far as a *successful* lawsuit is concerned. The next question is, Will you have a lawsuit at all; and is it worth while buying this fellow? That I can't say unless I see him myself."

"I wish to Heaven you would!"

"Very willingly: 't is a sort of thing I like; I'm fond of dealing with rogues,—it amuses me. This day week? I'll be at your house,—your proxy; I shall do better than Blackwell. And since you say you are wanted at the Lakes, go down, and leave all to me."

"A thousand thanks. I can't say how grateful I am. You certainly are the kindest and cleverest person in the world."

"You can't think worse of the world's cleverness and kindness than I do," was Lilburne's rather ambiguous answer to the compliment. "But why does my sister want to see you?"

"Oh, I forgot! Here is her letter. I was going to ask your advice in this too."

Lord Lilburne took the letter, and glanced over it with the rapid eye of a man accustomed to seize in everything the main gist and pith.

"An offer to my pretty niece, Mr. Spencer, requires no fortune, his uncle will settle all his own—poor silly old man! All! Why that's only £1,000 a year. You don't think much of this, eh? How my sister can even ask you about it puzzles me."

"Why, you see, Lilburne," said Mr. Beaufort, rather embarrassed, "there is no question of fortune,—nothing to go out of the family; and, really, Arthur is so expensive, and if she were to marry *well*, I could not give her less than fifteen or twenty thousand pounds."

"Aha! I see! Every man to his taste; here a daughter, there a dowry. You are devilish fond of money, Beaufort. Any pleasure in avarice, eh?"

Mr. Beaufort coloured very much at the remark and the question, and, forcing a smile, said,—

"You are severe. But you don't know what it is to be father to a young man."

"Then a great many young women have told me sad fibs! But you are right in *your* sense of the phrase. No, I never had an heir apparent, thank Heaven! No children imposed upon me by law,—natural enemies, to count the years between the bells that ring for their majority, and those that

will toll for my decease. It is enough for me that I have a brother and a sister, that my brother's son will inherit my estates, and that, in the meantime, he grudges me every tick in that clock. What then? If he had been *my* uncle, I had done the same. Meanwhile, I see as little of him as good breeding will permit. On the face of a rich man's heir is written the rich man's *memento mori*! But *revenons à nos moutons*. Yes, if you give your daughter no fortune, your death will be so much the more profitable to Arthur!"

"Really, you take such a very odd view of the matter," said Mr. Beaufort, exceedingly shocked; "but I see you don't like the marriage; perhaps you are right."

"Indeed, I have no choice in the matter; I never interfere between father and children. If I had children myself, I will, however, tell you, for your comfort, that they might marry exactly as they pleased,—I would never thwart them. I should be too happy to get them out of my way. If they married well, one would have all the credit; if ill, one would have an excuse to disown them. As I said before, I dislike poor relations. Though if Camilla lives at the Lakes when she is married, it is but a letter now and then; and that's your wife's trouble, not yours. But, Spencer,—what Spencer? What family? Was there not a Mr. Spencer who lived at Winandermere, who—"

"Who went with us in search of these boys,—to be sure. Very likely the same,—nay, he must be so. I thought so at the first."

"Go down to the Lakes to-morrow. You may hear something about your *nephews*;" at that word Mr. Beaufort winced. "'Tis well to be forearmed."

"Many thanks for all your counsel," said Beaufort, rising, and glad to escape; for though both he and his wife held the advice of Lord Lilburne in the highest reverence, they always smarted beneath the quiet and careless stings which accompanied the honey. Lord Lilburne was singular in this,—he would give to any one who asked it, but especially a relation, the best advice in his power; and none gave better,—that is, more *worldly* advice. Thus, without the least benevolence,

he was often of the greatest service; but he could not help mixing up the draught with as much aloes and bitter-apple as possible. His intellect delighted in exhibiting itself even gratuitously; his heart equally delighted in that only cruelty which polished life leaves to its tyrants towards their equals, — thrusting pins into the feelings and breaking self-love upon the wheel. But just as Mr. Beaufort had drawn on his gloves and gained the doorway, a thought seemed to strike Lord Lilburne, —

“By the by,” he said, “you understand that when I promised I would try and settle the matter for you, I only meant that I would learn the exact causes you have for alarm on the one hand or for a compromise with this fellow on the other. If the last be advisable you are aware that I cannot interfere. I might get into a scrape; and Beaufort Court is not *my* property.”

“I don’t quite understand you.”

“I am plain enough, too. If there is money to be given it is given in order to defeat what is called *justice*, — to keep these nephews of yours out of their inheritance. Now, should this ever come to light, it would have an ugly appearance. They who risk the blame must be the persons who possess the estate.”

“If you think it dishonourable or dishonest — ” said Beaufort, irresolutely.

“I! I never can advise as to the feelings; I can only advise as to the policy. If you don’t think there ever was a marriage, it may, still, be honest in you to prevent the bore of a lawsuit.”

“But if he can prove to me that they were married?”

“Pooh!” said Lilburne, raising his eyebrows with a slight expression of contemptuous impatience; “it rests on yourself whether or not he *prove it to your satisfaction!* For my part, as a third person, I am persuaded the marriage did take place; but if I had Beaufort Court, my convictions would be all the other way. You understand. I am too happy to serve you. But no man can be expected to jeopardize his character or coquet with the law, unless it be for his own in-

dividual interest. *Then*, of course, he must judge for himself. Adieu! I expect some friends — foreigners, Carlists — to whist. You won't join them?"

"I never play, you know. You will write to me at Winan-dermere: and at all events, you will keep off the man till I return?"

"Certainly."

Beaufort, whom the latter part of the conversation had comforted far less than the former, hesitated, and turned the door-handle three or four times; but glancing towards his brother-in-law, he saw in that cold face so little sympathy in the struggle between interest and conscience, that he judged it best to withdraw at once.

As soon as he was gone, Lilburne summoned his valet, who had lived with him many years, and who was his confidant in all the adventurous gallantries with which he still enlivened the autumn of his life.

"Dykeman," said he, "you have let out that lady?"

"Yes, my lord."

"I am not at home if she calls again. She is stupid; she cannot get the girl to come to her again. I shall trust you with an adventure, Dykeman,—an adventure that will remind you of our young days, man. This charming creature—I tell you she is irresistible,—her very oddities bewitch me. You must—well, you look uneasy. What would you say?"

"My lord, I have found out more about her — and — and —"

"Well, well."

The valet drew near and whispered something in his master's ear.

"They are idiots who say it, then," answered Lilburne.

"And," faltered the man, with the shame of humanity on his face, "she is not worthy your lordship's notice, — a poor —"

"Yes, I know she is poor; and for that reason, there can be no difficulty, if the thing is properly managed. You never, perhaps, heard of a certain Philip, king of Macedon; but I will tell you what he once said, as well as I can re-

member it: 'Lead an ass with a pannier of gold; send the ass through the gates of a city, and all the sentinels will run away.' Poor! where there is love, there is charity also, Dykeman. Besides —"

Here Lilburne's countenance assumed a sudden aspect of dark and angry passion,—he broke off abruptly, rose, and paced the room, muttering to himself. Suddenly he stopped, and put his hand to his hip, as an expression of pain again altered the character of his face.

"The limb pains me still! Dykeman, I was scarce — twenty-one — when I became a cripple for life." He paused, drew a long breath, smiled, rubbed his hands gently, and added, "Never fear! you shall be the ass; and thus Philip of Macedon begins to fill the pannier." And he tossed his purse into the hands of the valet, whose face seemed to lose its anxious embarrassment at the touch of the gold. Lilburne glanced at him with a quiet sneer: "Go! I will give you my orders when I undress."

"Yes!" he repeated to himself, "the limb pains me still. But he died! — shot as a man would shoot a jay or a polecat! I have the newspaper still in that drawer. *He* died an outcast, a felon, a murderer! And I blasted his name, and I seduced his mistress, and I—am John Lord Lilburne!"

About ten o'clock, some half-a-dozen of those gay lovers of London, who, like Lilburne, remain faithful to its charms when more vulgar worshippers desert its sunburnt streets — mostly single men, mostly men of middle age — dropped in; and soon after came three or four high-born foreigners, who had followed into England the exile of the unfortunate Charles X. Their looks, at once proud and sad, their mustaches curled downwards, their beards permitted to grow, made at first a strong contrast with the smooth gay Englishmen. But Lilburne, who was fond of French society, and who, when he pleased, could be courteous and agreeable, soon placed the exiles at their ease; and in the excitement of high play, all differences of mood and humour speedily vanished. Morning was in the skies before they sat down to supper.

"You have been very fortunate to-night, milord," said one of the Frenchmen, with an envious tone of congratulation.

"But, indeed," said another, who, having been several times his host's partner, had won largely, "you are the finest player, milord, I ever encountered."

"Always excepting M. Deschappelles and —," replied Lilburne, indifferently; and turning the conversation, he asked one of the guests why he had not introduced him to a French officer of merit and distinction,— "With whom," said Lord Lilburne, "I understand that you are intimate, and of whom I hear your countrymen very often speak."

"You mean De Vaudemont. Poor fellow!" said a middle-aged Frenchman, of a graver appearance than the rest.

"But why 'poor fellow!' Monsieur de Liancourt?"

"He was rising so high before the revolution. There was not a braver officer in the army; but he is but a soldier of fortune, and his career is closed."

"Till the Bourbons return," said another Carlist, playing with his mustache.

"You will really honour me much by introducing me to him," said Lord Lilburne. "De Vaudemont,—it is a good name; perhaps, too, he plays at whist."

"But," observed one of the Frenchmen, "I am by no means sure that he has the best right in the world to the name. 'Tis a strange story."

"May I hear it?" asked the host.

"Certainly. It is briefly this: There was an old Vicomte de Vaudemont about Paris; of good birth, but extremely poor,—a *mauvais sujet*. He had already had two wives, and run through their fortunes. Being old and ugly, and men who survive two wives having a bad reputation among marriageable ladies at Paris, he found it difficult to get a third. Despairing of the *noblesse* he went among the *bourgeoisie* with that hope. His family were kept in perpetual fear of a ridiculous *mésalliance*. Among these relations was Madame de Merville, whom you may have heard of."

"Madame de Merville! Ah, yes! Handsome, was she not?"

"It is true. Madame de Merville, whose failing was pride, was known more than once to have bought off the matrimonial inclinations of the amorous vicomte. Suddenly there appeared in her circles a very handsome young man. He was presented formally to her friends as the son of the Vicomte de Vaudemont by his second marriage with an English lady, brought up in England and now for the first time publicly acknowledged. Some scandal was circulated —"

"Sir," interrupted M. de Liancourt, very gravely, "the scandal was such as all honourable men must stigmatize and despise,—it was only to be traced to some lying lackey, —a scandal that the young man was already the lover of a woman of stainless reputation the very first day that he entered Paris! I answer for the falsity of that report. But that report I own was one that decided not only Madame de Merville, who was a sensitive — too sensitive — a person, but my friend young Vaudemont, to a marriage from the pecuniary advantages of which he was too high spirited not to shrink."

"Well," said Lord Lilburne, "then this young De Vaudemont married Madame de Merville?"

"No," said Liancourt somewhat sadly, "it was not so decreed; for Vaudemont, with a feeling which belongs to a gentleman, and which I honour, while deeply and gratefully attached to Madame de Merville, desired that he might first win for himself some honourable distinction before he claimed a hand to which men of fortunes so much higher had aspired in vain. I am not ashamed," he added, after a slight pause, "to say that I had been one of the rejected suitors, and that I still revere the memory of Eugénie de Merville. The young man, therefore, was to have entered my regiment. Before, however, he had joined it, and while yet in the full flush of a young man's love for a woman formed to excite the strongest attachment, she — she —" The Frenchman's voice trembled, and he resumed with affected composure, "Madame de Merville, who had the best and kindest heart that ever beat in a human breast, learned one day that there was a poor widow in the garret of the hotel she inhabited who was dangerously ill, without medicine and without food, having lost

her only friend and supporter in her husband some time before. In the impulse of the moment, Madame de Merville herself attended this widow, caught the fever that preyed upon her, was confined to her bed ten days, and died as she had lived, in serving others and forgetting self. And so much, sir, for the scandal you spoke of!"

"A warning," observed Lord Lilburne, "against trifling with one's health by that vanity of parading a kind heart which is called charity. If charity, *mon cher*, begins at home, it is in the drawing-room, not the garret!"

The Frenchman looked at his host in some disdain, bit his lip, and was silent.

"But still," resumed Lord Lilburne, — "still it is so probable that your old vicomte had a son, and I can so perfectly understand why he did not wish to be embarrassed with him as long as he could help it, that I do not understand why there should be any doubt of the younger De Vaudemont's parentage."

"Because," said the Frenchman who had first commenced the narrative, — "because the young man refused to take the legal steps to proclaim his birth and naturalize himself a Frenchman; because, no sooner was Madame de Merville dead, than he forsook the father he had so newly discovered, forsook France, and entered with some other officers, under the brave —, in the service of one of the native princes of India."

"But perhaps he was poor," observed Lord Lilburne. "A father is a very good thing and a country is a very good thing, but still a man must have money; and if your father does not do much for you, somehow or other, your country generally follows his example."

"My lord," said Liancourt, "my friend here has forgotten to say that Madame de Merville had by deed of gift (though unknown to her lover), before her death, made over to young Vaudemont the bulk of her fortune; and that when he was informed of this donation after her decease, and sufficiently recovered from the stupor of his grief, he summoned her relations round him, declared that her memory was too dear to

him for wealth to console him for her loss, and reserving to himself but a modest and bare sufficiency for the common necessities of a gentleman, he divided the rest amongst them, and repaired to the East,—not only to conquer his sorrow by the novelty and stir of an exciting life, but to carve out with his own hand the reputation of an honourable and brave man. My friend remembered the scandal long buried,—he forgot the generous action.”

“Your friend, you see, my dear Monsieur de Liancourt,” remarked Lilburne, “is more a man of the world than you are!”

“And I was just going to observe,” said the friend thus referred to, “that that very action seemed to confirm the rumour that there had been some little manœuvring as to this unexpected addition to the name of De Vaudemont; for if himself related to Madame de Merville, why have such scruples to receive her gift?”

“A very shrewd remark,” said Lord Lilburne, looking with some respect at the speaker; “and I own that it is a very unaccountable proceeding, and one of which I don’t think you or I would ever have been guilty. Well, and the old Vicomte?”

“Did not live long!” said the Frenchman, evidently gratified by his host’s compliment, while Liancourt threw himself back in his chair in grave displeasure. “The young man remained some years in India, and when he returned to Paris, our friend here, M. de Liancourt (then in favour with Charles X.) and Madame de Merville’s relations took him up. He had already acquired a reputation in this foreign service, and he obtained a place at the court, and a commission in the king’s guards. I allow that he would certainly have made a career, had it not been for the Three Days. As it is, you see him in London, like the rest of us, an exile.”

“And, I suppose, without a *sou*.”

“No, I believe that he had still saved, and even augmented, in India, the portion he allotted to himself from Madame de Merville’s bequest.”

“And if he don’t play whist, he ought to play it,” said

Lilburne. "You have roused my curiosity; I hope you will let me make his acquaintance, Monsieur de Liancourt. I am no politician, but allow me to propose this toast, 'Success to those who have the wit to plan, and the strength to execute,'—in other words, 'the Right Divine!'"

Soon afterwards the guests retired.

CHAPTER IV.

Res. Happily, he's the second time come to them. — *Hamlet.*

It was the evening after that in which the conversations recorded in our last chapter were held,—evening in the quiet suburb of H——. The desertion and silence of the metropolis in September had extended to its neighbouring hamlets,—a village in the heart of the country could scarcely have seemed more still; the lamps were lighted, many of the shops already closed; a few of the sober couples and retired spinsters of the place might, here and there, be seen slowly wandering homeward after their evening walk; two or three dogs, in spite of the prohibitions of the magistrates placarded on the walls,—manifestoes which threatened with death the dogs, and predicted more than ordinary madness to the public,—were playing in the main road, disturbed from time to time as the slow coach, plying between the city and the suburb, crawled along the thoroughfare, or as the brisk mails whirled rapidly by, announced by the cloudy dust and the guard's lively horn. Gradually even these evidences of life ceased; the saunterers disappeared, the mails had passed, the dogs gave place to the later and more stealthy perambulations of their feline successors, "who love the moon." At unfrequent intervals, the more important shops—the linen-drapers', the chemists', and the gin-palace—still poured out across the shadowy road their streams of light from windows yet unclosed; but with these exceptions, the business of the place stood still.

At this time there emerged from a milliner's house — shop, to outward appearance, it was not, evincing its gentility and its degree above the Capelocracy, to use a certain classical neologism, by a brass plate on an oak door, whereon was graven, "Miss Semper, Milliner and Dressmaker, from Madame Devy," — at this time, I say, and from this house there emerged the light and graceful form of a young female. She held in her left hand a little basket, of the contents of which (for it was empty) she had apparently just disposed; and as she stepped across the road, the lamplight fell on a face in the first bloom of youth, and characterized by an expression of child-like innocence and candour. It was a face regularly and exquisitely lovely, yet something there was in the aspect that saddened you, — you knew not why, for it was not sad itself; on the contrary, the lips smiled and the eyes sparkled. As she now glided along the shadowy street with a light, quick step, a man, who had hitherto been concealed by the portico of an attorney's house, advanced stealthily, and followed her at a little distance. Unconscious that she was dogged, and seemingly fearless of all danger, the girl went lightly on, swinging her basket playfully to and fro, and chanting, in a low but musical tone, some verses that seemed rather to belong to the nursery than to that age which the fair singer had attained.

As she came to an angle which the main street formed with a lane, narrow and partially lighted, a policeman stationed there looked hard at her, and then touched his hat with an air of respect, in which there seemed also a little of compassion.

"Good night to you," said the girl, passing him, and with a frank, gay tone.

"Shall I attend you home, Miss?" said the man.

"What for? I am very well!" answered the young woman, with an accent and look of innocent surprise.

Just at this time the man, who had hitherto followed her, gained the spot, and turned down the lane.

"Yes," replied the policeman; "but it is getting dark, Miss."

"So it is every night when I walk home, unless there's a

moon. Good by. — The moon," she repeated to herself, as she walked on, "I used to be afraid of the moon when I was a little child;" and then, after a pause, she murmured, in a low chant, —

"The moon she is a wandering ghost,
That walks in penance nightly;
How sad she is, that wandering moon,
For all she shines so brightly!

"I watched her eyes when I was young
Until they turned my brain,
And now I often weep to think
'T will ne'er be right again.'"

As the murmur of these words died at a distance down the lane in which the girl had disappeared, the policeman, who had paused to listen, shook his head mournfully, and said, while he moved on, —

"Poor thing! they should not let her always go about by herself; and yet who would harm her?"

Meanwhile the girl proceeded along the lane, which was skirted by small but not mean houses, till it terminated in a cross-stile that admitted into a churchyard. Here hung the last lamp in the path, and a few dim stars broke palely over the long grass and scattered gravestones, without piercing the deep shadow which the church threw over a large portion of the sacred ground. Just as she passed the stile, the man whom we have before noticed, and who had been leaning as if waiting for some one against the pales, approached, and said gently, —

"Ah, Miss! it is a lone place for one so beautiful as you are to be alone. You ought never to be on foot."

The girl stopped, and looked full, but without any alarm in her eyes, into the man's face.

"Go away!" she said, with a half-peevisish, half-kindly tone of command. "I don't know you."

"But I have been sent to speak to you by one who does know you, Miss, — one who loves you to distraction; he has seen you before at Mrs. West's. He is so grieved to think you should walk — you ought, he says, to have every luxury

—that he has sent his carriage for you. It is on the other side of the yard. Do come now;" and he laid his hand, though very lightly, on her arm.

"At Mrs. West's?" she said; and, for the first time, her voice and look showed fear. "Go away directly! How dare you touch me!"

"But, my dear Miss, you have no idea how my employer loves you, and how rich he is. See, he has sent you all this money; it is gold, — real gold. You may have what you like, if you will but come. Now, don't be silly, Miss."

The girl made no answer, but with a sudden spring passed the man, and ran lightly and rapidly along the path, in an opposite direction from that to which the tempter had pointed when inviting her to the carriage. The man, surprised but not baffled, reached her in an instant, and caught hold of her dress.

"Stay! you must, you must!" he said threateningly; and loosening his grasp on her shawl, he threw his arm round her waist.

"Don't!" cried the girl, pleadingly, and apparently subdued, turning her fair, soft face upon her pursuer, and clasping her hands. "Be quiet! Fanny is silly! No one is ever rude to poor Fanny!"

"And no one will be rude to you, Miss," said the man, apparently touched; "but I dare not go without you. You don't know what you refuse. Come;" and he attempted gently to draw her back.

"No, no!" said the girl, changing from supplication to anger, and raising her voice into a loud shriek, "no! I will —"

"Nay, then," interrupted the man, looking round anxiously; and with a quick and dexterous movement he threw a large handkerchief over her face, and as he held it fast to her lips with one hand, he lifted her from the ground. Still violently struggling, the girl contrived to remove the handkerchief, and once more her shriek of terror rang through the violated sanctuary.

At that instant a loud deep voice was heard, "Who calls?" and a tall figure seemed to rise as from the grave itself, and

emerge from the shadow of the church. A moment more, and a strong gripe was laid on the shoulder of the ravisher. "What is this? On God's ground, too! Release her, wretch!"

The man, trembling, half with superstitious half with bodily fear, let go his captive, who fell at once at the knees of her deliverer. "Don't *you* hurt me too," she said, as the tears rolled down her eyes. "I am a good girl, — and my grandfather's blind."

The stranger bent down and raised her; then looking round for the assailant with an eye whose dark fire shone through the gloom, he perceived the coward stealing off. He disdained to pursue.

"My poor child," said he, with that voice which the strong assume to the weak, the man to some wounded infant, — the voice of tender superiority and compassion, "there is no cause for fear now. Be soothed. Do you live near? Shall I see you home?"

"Thank you! That's kind. Pray do!" And with an infantine confidence she took his hand, as a child does that of a grown-up person. So they walked on together.

"And," said the stranger, "do you know that man? Has he insulted you before?"

"No; don't talk of him; *ce me fait mal!*" And she put her hand to her forehead.

The French was spoken with so French an accent that in some curiosity the stranger cast his eye over her plain dress.

"You speak French well."

"Do I? I wish I knew more words, — I only recollect a few. When I am very happy or very sad they come into my head. But I am happy now. I like your voice, I like you. Oh, I have dropped my basket!"

"Shall I go back for it, or shall I buy you another?"

"Another? oh, no! come back for it. How kind you are! Ah, I see it!" and she broke away and ran forward to pick it up.

When she had recovered it, she laughed, she spoke to it, she kissed it.

Her companion smiled as he said, —

"Some sweetheart has given you that basket, — it seems but a common basket, too."

"I have had it, oh, ever since — since — I don't know how long! It came with me from France. It was full of little toys; *they* are gone; I am so sorry!"

"How old are you?"

"I don't know."

"My pretty one," said the stranger, with deep pity in his rich voice, "your mother should not let you go out alone at this hour."

"Mother! Mother!" repeated the girl, in a tone of surprise.

"Have you no mother?"

"No! I had a father once; but he died, they say. I did not see him die. I sometimes cry when I think that I shall never, never see him again! But," she said, changing her accent from melancholy almost to joy, "he is to have a grave here like the other girls' fathers, a fine stone upon it, — and all to be done with my money!"

"Your money, my child?"

"Yes; the money I make. I sell my work and take the money to my grandfather; but I lay by a little every week for a gravestone for my father."

"Will the gravestone be placed in *that* churchyard?" They were now in another lane; and as he spoke, the stranger checked her, and bending down to look into her face, he murmured to himself, "Is it possible? It must be! it must!"

"Yes! I love that churchyard. My brother told me to put flowers there; and Grandfather and I sit there in the summer, without speaking. But I don't talk much, I like singing better, —

"All things that good and harmless are
Are taught, they say, to sing, —
The maiden resting at her work;
The bird upon the wing;
The little ones at church, in prayer;
The angels in the sky, —
The angels less when babes are born
Than when the aged die.'"

And unconscious of the latent moral, dark or cheering, according as we estimate the value of *this* life, couched in the concluding rhyme, Fanny turned round to the stranger, and said, "Why should the angels be glad when the aged die?"

"That they are released from a false, unjust, and miserable world, in which the first man was a rebel and the second a murderer!" muttered the stranger between his teeth, which he gnashed as he spoke.

The girl did not understand him; she shook her head gently, and made no reply. A few moments, and she paused before a small house.

"This is my home."

"It is so," said her companion, examining the exterior of the house with an earnest gaze; "and your name is Fanny."

"Yes, every one knows Fanny. Come in;" and the girl opened the door with a latch-key.

The stranger bowed his stately height as he crossed the lowly threshold and followed his guide into a little parlour.

Before a table on which burned dimly, and with unheeded wick, a single candle, sat a man of advanced age; and as he turned his face to the door, the stranger saw that he was blind.

The girl bounded to his chair, passed her arms round the old man's neck, and kissed his forehead; then nestling herself at his feet and leaning her clasped hands caressingly on his knee, she said, —

"Grandpapa, I have brought you somebody you must love. He has been so kind to Fanny."

"And neither of you can remember me!" said the guest.

The old man, whose dull face seemed to indicate dotage, half raised himself at the sound of the stranger's voice.

"Who is that?" said he, with a feeble and querulous voice. "Who wants me?"

"I am the friend of your lost son. I am he who, ten years ago, brought Fanny to your roof, and gave her to your care, — your son's last charge; and you blessed your son, and forgave him, and vowed to be a father to his Fanny."

The old man, who had now slowly risen to his feet, trembled violently, and stretched out his hands.

"Come near, near; let me put my hands on your head. I cannot see you; but Fanny talks of you, and prays for you; and Fanny — she has been an angel to me!"

The stranger approached and half knelt as the old man spread his hands over his head, muttering inaudibly. Meanwhile Fanny, pale as death, her lips apart, an eager, painful expression on her face, looked inquiringly on the dark, marked countenance of the visitor, and creeping towards him inch by inch, fearfully touched his dress, his arms, his countenance.

"Brother," she said at last, doubtingly and timidly, — "brother, I thought I could never forget you! But you are not like my brother; you are older; you are — you are! — no! no! you are not my brother!"

"I am much changed, Fanny; and you too!"

He smiled as he spoke; and the smile — sweet and pitying — thoroughly changed the character of his face, which was ordinarily stern, grave, and proud.

"I know you now!" exclaimed Fanny, in a tone of wild joy. "And you come back from that grave! My flowers have brought you back at last! I knew they would! Brother! Brother!"

And she threw herself on his breast and burst into passionate tears. Then, suddenly drawing herself back, she laid her finger on his arm, and looked up at him beseechingly.

"Pray, now, is *he* really dead? He, my father! he too was lost like you. Can't he come back again as you have done?"

"Do you grieve for him still, then? Poor girl!" said the stranger, evasively, and seating himself. Fanny continued to listen for an answer to her touching question; but finding that none was given, she stole away to a corner of the room, and leaned her face on her hands, and seemed to think, till at last, as she so sat, the tears began to flow down her cheeks, and she wept, but silently and unnoticed.

"But, sir," said the guest, after a short pause, "how is this? Fanny tells me she supports you by her work. Are

you so poor, then? Yet I left you your son's bequest; and you too, I understood, though not rich, were not in want!"

"There was a curse on my gold," said the old man, sternly. "It was stolen from us."

There was another pause. Simon broke it.

"And you, young man, how has it fared with you? You have prospered, I hope."

"I am as I have been for years, — alone in the world, without kindred and without friends. But, thanks to Heaven, I am not a beggar!"

"No kindred and no friends!" repeated the old man. "No father, no brother, no wife, no sister!"

"None! No one to care whether I live or die," answered the stranger, with a mixture of pride and sadness in his voice.

"But, as the song has it —

" 'I care for nobody — no, not I,
For nobody cares for me! ' "

There was a certain pathos in the mockery with which he repeated the homely lines, although, as he did, he gathered himself up, as if conscious of a certain consolation and reliance on the resources not dependent on others which he had found in his own strong limbs and his own stout heart.

At that moment he felt a soft touch upon his hand, and he saw Fanny looking at him through the tears that still flowed.

"You have no one to care for you? Don't say so! Come and live with us, brother; we'll care for you. I have never forgotten the flowers, never! Do come! Fanny shall love you. Fanny can work for *three*!"

"And they call her an idiot!" mumbled the old man, with a vacant smile on his lips.

"My sister! You *shall* be my sister! Forlorn one, whom even Nature has fooled and betrayed! Sister! — we, both orphans! Sister!" exclaimed that dark, stern man, passionately, and with a broken voice; and he opened his arms, and Fanny, without a blush or a thought of shame, threw herself on his breast. He kissed her forehead with a kiss that was, indeed, pure and holy as a brother's; and Fanny felt that he had left upon her cheek a tear that was not her own.

"Well," he said, with an altered voice, and taking the old man's hand, "what say you? Shall I take up my lodging with you? I have a little money; I can protect and aid you both. I shall be often away — in London or elsewhere — and will not intrude too much on you. But you blind, and she —" here he broke off the sentence abruptly and went on — "you should not be left alone. And this neighbourhood, that burial-place, are dear to me. I, too, Fanny, have lost a parent; and that grave —"

He paused, and then added, in a trembling voice, "And you have placed flowers over that grave!"

"Stay with us," said the blind man, — "not for our sake, but your own. The world is a bad place. I have been long sick of the world. Yes! come and live near the burial-ground, — the nearer you are to the grave, the safer you are; — and you have a little money, you say!"

"I will come to-morrow, then. I must return now. To-morrow, Fanny, we shall meet again."

"*Must* you go?" said Fanny, tenderly. "But you *will* come again; you know I used to think every one died when *he* left me. I am wiser now. Yet still, when you do leave me, it is true that you die for Fanny!"

At this moment as the three persons were grouped, each had assumed a posture of form, an expression of face, which a painter of fitting sentiment and skill would have loved to study. The visitor had gained the door; and as he stood there, his noble height, the magnificent strength and health of his manhood in its full prime, contrasted alike the almost spectral debility of extreme age and the graceful delicacy of Fanny, — half girl, half child. There was something foreign in his air, and the half military habit, relieved by the red ribbon of the Bourbon knighthood. His complexion was dark as that of a Moor, and his raven hair curled close to the stately head; the soldier-mustache — thick, but glossy as silk — shaded the firm lip; and the pointed beard, assumed by the exiled Carlists, heightened the effect of the strong and haughty features and the expression of the martial countenance.

But as Fanny's voice died on his ear, he half averted that

proud face; and the dark eyes — almost Oriental in their brilliancy and depth of shade — seemed soft and humid. And there stood Fanny, in a posture of such unconscious sadness, such childlike innocence, — her arms drooping, her face wistfully turned to his, and a half smile upon the lips, that made still more touching the tears not yet dried upon her cheeks. While thin, frail, shadowy, with white hair and furrowed cheeks, the old man fixed his sightless orbs on space; and his face, usually only animated from the lethargy of advancing dotage by a certain querulous cynicism, now grew suddenly earnest and even thoughtful, as Fanny spoke of Death!

CHAPTER V.

Ulyss. Time hath a wallet at his back
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion.
... Perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honour bright. — *Troilus and Cressida.*

I HAVE not sought — as would have been easy, by a little ingenuity in the earlier portion of this narrative — whatever source of vulgar interest might be derived from the mystery of names and persons. As in Charles Spencer the reader is allowed at a glance to detect Sidney Morton, so in Philip de Vaudemont (the stranger who rescued Fanny) the reader at once recognizes the hero of my tale; but since neither of these young men has a better right to the name resigned than to the name adopted, it will be simpler and more convenient to designate them by those appellations by which they are now known to the world. In truth, Philip de Vaudemont was scarcely the same being as Philip Morton. In the short visit he had paid to the elder Gawtreys when he consigned Fanny to his charge, he had given no name; and the one he now took (when, towards the evening of the next day, he returned to Simon's house) the old man heard for the first time. Once

more sunk into his usual apathy, Simon did not express any surprise that a Frenchman should be so well acquainted with English, — he scarcely observed that the name was French. Simon's age seemed daily to bring him more and more to that state when life is mere mechanism, and the soul, preparing for its departure, no longer heeds the tenement that crumbles silently and neglected into its lonely dust. Vaudemont came with but little luggage (for he had an apartment also in London) and no attendant; a single horse was consigned to the stables of an inn at hand, and he seemed, as soldiers are, more careful for the comforts of the animal than his own. There was but one woman servant in the humble household, who did all the ruder work, for Fanny's industry could afford it. The solitary servant and the homely fare sufficed for the simple and hardy adventurer.

Fanny, with a countenance radiant with joy, took his hand and led him to his room. Poor child! with that instinct of *woman* which never deserted her, she had busied herself the whole day in striving to deck the chamber according to her own notions of comfort. She had stolen from her little hoard wherewithal to make some small purchases, on which the Dowbiggin of the suburb had been consulted; and what with flowers on the table and a fire at the hearth, the room looked cheerful.

She watched him as he glanced around, and felt disappointed that he did not utter the admiration she expected. Angry at last with the indifference which, in fact, as to external accommodation, was habitual to him, she plucked his sleeve, and said, —

"Why don't you speak? Is it not nice? Fanny did her best."

"And a thousand thanks to Fanny! It is all I could wish."

"There is another room, bigger than this, but the wicked woman who robbed us slept *there*; and besides, you said you liked the churchyard. See!" and she opened the window and pointed to the church-tower rising dark against the evening sky.

"This is better than all!" said Vaudemont; and he looked

out from the window in a silent revery, which Fanny did not disturb.

And now he was settled! From a career so wild, agitated, and various, the adventurer paused in that humble resting-nook. But quiet is not repose, obscurity is not content. Often as, morn and eve, he looked forth upon the spot where his mother's heart, unconscious of love and woe, mouldered away, the indignant and bitter feelings of the wronged outcast and the son who could not clear the mother's name swept away the subdued and gentle melancholy into which time usually softens regret for the dead, and with which most of us think of the distant past and the once joyous childhood!

In this man's breast lay, concealed by his external calm, those memories and aspirations which are as strong as passions. In his earlier years, when he had been put to hard shifts for existence, he had found no leisure for close and brooding reflection upon that spoliation of just rights, that calumny upon his mother's name, which had first brought the Night into his Morning. His resentment towards the Beauforts, it is true, had ever been an intense but a fitful and irregular passion. It was exactly in proportion as, by those rare and romantic incidents which Fiction cannot invent, and which Narrative takes with diffidence from the great Store-house of Real Life, his steps had ascended in the social ladder, that all which his childhood had lost, all which the robbers of his heritage had gained, the grandeur and the power of WEALTH, above all, the hourly and the tranquil happiness of a stainless name, became palpable and distinct. He had loved Eugénie as a boy loves for the first time an accomplished woman. He regarded her, so refined, so gentle, so gifted, with the feelings due to a superior being, with an eternal recollection of the ministering angel that had shone upon him when he stood on the dark abyss. She was the first that had redeemed his fate, the first that had guided aright his path, the first that had tamed the savage at his breast; it was the young lion charmed by the eyes of Una. The outline of his story had been truly given at Lord Lilburne's. Despite his pride — which revolted from such obligations to another, and a woman; which disliked

and struggled against a disguise which at once and alone saved him from the detection of the past and the terrors of the future—he had yielded to her, the wise and the gentle, as one whose judgment he could not doubt; and, indeed, the slanderous falsehoods circulated by the lackey, to whose discretion, the night of Gawtrey's death, Eugénie had preferred to confide her own honour rather than another's life, had (as Liancourt rightly stated) left Philip no option but that which Madame de Merville deemed the best, whether for her happiness or her good name. Then had followed a brief season,—the holiday of his life,—the season of young hope and passion, of brilliancy and joy, closing by that abrupt death which again left him lonely in the world.

When, from the grief that succeeded to the death of Eugénie, he woke to find himself amidst the strange faces and exciting scenes of an Oriental court, he turned with hard and disgusting contempt from Pleasure as an infidelity to the dead. Ambition crept over him. His mind hardened as his cheek bronzed under those burning suns; his hardy frame, his energies prematurely awakened, his constitutional disregard to danger, made him a brave and skilful soldier. He acquired reputation and rank. But as time went on, the ambition took a higher flight. He felt his sphere circumscribed; the Eastern indolence that filled up the long intervals between Eastern action chafed a temper never at rest. He returned to France. His reputation, Liancourt's friendship, and the relations of Eugénie—grateful, as has before been implied, for the generosity with which he surrendered the principal part of her donation—opened for him a new career, but one painful and galling. In the Indian court there was no question of his birth,—one adventurer was equal with the rest. But in Paris, a man attempting to rise provoked all the sarcasm of wit, all the cavils of party; and in polished and civil life, what valour has weapons against a jest? Thus, in civilization, all the passions that spring from humiliated self-love and baffled aspiration again preyed upon his breast. He saw then that the more he struggled from obscurity, the more acute would become research into his true origin; and his

writhing pride almost stung to death his ambition. To succeed in life by regular means was indeed difficult for this man: always recoiling from the name he bore; always strong in the hope yet to regain that to which he conceived himself entitled; cherishing that pride of country which never deserts the native of a Free State, however harsh a parent she may have proved; and, above all, whatever his ambition and his passions, taking, from the very misfortunes he had known, an indomitable belief in the ultimate justice of Heaven, — he had refused to sever the last ties that connected him with his lost heritage and his forsaken land; he refused to be naturalized, to make the name he bore legally undisputed; he was contented to be an alien. Neither was Vaudemont fitted exactly for that crisis in the social world when the men of journals and talk bustle aside the men of action. He had not cultivated literature, he had no book-knowledge; the world had been his school, and stern life his teacher. Still, eminently skilled in those physical accomplishments which men admire and soldiers covet, calm and self-possessed in manner, of great personal advantages, of much ready talent and of practised observation in character, he continued to breast the obstacles around him, and to establish himself in the favour of those in power. It was natural to a person so reared and circumstanced to have no sympathy with what is called the popular cause. He was no citizen in the state, — he was a stranger in the land. He had suffered and still suffered too much from mankind to have that philanthropy, sometimes visionary but always noble, which in fact generally springs from the studies we cultivate not in the forum but the closet. Men, alas! too often lose the Democratic Enthusiasm in proportion as they find reason to suspect or despise their kind; and if there were not hopes for the Future which this hard, practical daily life does not suffice to teach us, the vision and the glory that belong to the Great Popular Creed, dimmed beneath the injustice, the follies, and the vices of the world as it is, would fade into the lukewarm sectarianism of temporary Party. Moreover, Vaudemont's habits of thought and reasoning were those of the camp, confirmed by the systems familiar to him in the East: he re

garded the populace as a soldier enamoured of discipline and order usually does. His theories, therefore, or rather his ignorance of what is sound in theory, went with Charles the Tenth in his excesses, but not with the timidity which terminated those excesses by dethronement and disgrace. Chafed to the heart, gnawed with proud grief, he obeyed the royal mandates, and followed the exiled monarch, — his hopes overthrown, his career in France annihilated forever. But on entering England, his temper, confident and ready of resource, fastened itself on new food. In the land where he had no name he might yet rebuild his fortunes. It was an arduous effort, an improbable hope; but the words heard by the bridge of Paris — words that had often cheered him in his exile through hardships and through dangers which it is unnecessary to our narrative to detail — yet rung again in his ear, as he leaped on his native land, — “Time, Faith, Energy.”

While such his character in the larger and more distant relations of life, in the closer circles of companionship many rare and noble qualities were visible. It is true that he was stern, perhaps imperious, of a temper that always struggled for command; but he was deeply susceptible of kindness, and if feared by those who opposed, loved by those who served him. About his character was that mixture of tenderness and fierceness which belonged, of old, to the descriptions of the warrior. Though so little lettered, Life had taught him a certain poetry of sentiment and idea, — more poetry, perhaps, in the silent thoughts that, in his happier moments, filled his solitude than in half the pages that his brother had read and written by the dreaming lake. A certain largeness of idea and nobility of impulse often made him *act* the sentiments of which bookmen *write*. With all his passions, he held licentiousness in disdain; with all his ambition for the *power* of wealth, he despised its *luxury*. Simple, masculine, severe, abstemious, he was of that mould in which, in earlier times, the successful men of action have been cast. But to successful action, circumstance is more necessary than to triumphant study.

It was to be expected that in proportion as he had been

familiar with a purer and nobler life, he should look with great and deep self-humiliation at his early association with Gawtrey. He was in this respect more severe on himself than any other mind ordinarily just and candid would have been, when fairly surveying the circumstances of penury, hunger, and despair which had driven him to Gawtrey's roof, the imperfect nature of his early education, the boyish trust and affection he had felt for his protector, and his own ignorance of and exemption from all the worst practices of that unhappy criminal; but still, when, with the knowledge he had now acquired, the *man* looked calmly back, his cheek burned with remorseful shame at his unreflecting companionship in a life of subterfuge and equivocation, the true nature of which, the *boy* (so circumstanced as we have shown him) might be forgiven for not at that time comprehending. Two advantages resulted, however, from the error and the remorse: first, the humiliation it brought, curbed in some measure a pride that might otherwise have been arrogant and unamiable; and secondly, as I have before intimated, his profound gratitude to Heaven for his deliverance from the snares that had beset his youth gave his future the guide of an earnest and heartfelt faith. He acknowledged in life no such thing as *accident*. Whatever his struggles, whatever his melancholy, whatever his sense of worldly wrong, he never despaired; for nothing now could shake his belief in one directing Providence.

The ways and habits of Vaudemont were not at discord with those of the quiet household in which he was now a guest. Like most men of strong frames, and accustomed to active, not studious pursuits, he rose early; and usually rode to London, to come back late at noon to their frugal meal. And if again, perhaps after the hour when Fanny and Simon retired, he would often return to London, his own pass-key readmitted him, at whatever time he came back, without disturbing the sleep of the household. Sometimes, when the sun began to decline, if the air was warm, the old man would crawl out, leaning on that strong arm, through the neighbouring lanes, ever returning through the lonely burial-ground; or when the blind host clung to his fireside, and composed himself to sleep,

Philip would saunter forth along with Fanny; and on the days when she went to sell her work or select her purchases, he always made a point of attending her; and her cheek wore a flush of pride when she saw him carrying her little basket, or waiting without, in musing patience, while she performed her commissions in the shops. Though in reality Fanny's intellect was ripening within, yet still the surface often misled the eye as to the depths. It was rather that something yet held back the faculties from their growth than that the faculties themselves were wanting. Her weakness was more of the nature of the infant's than of one afflicted with incurable imbecility. For instance, she managed the little household with skill and prudence; she could calculate in her head, as rapidly as Vaudemont himself, the arithmetic necessary to her simple duties; she knew the value of money, — which is more than some of us wise folk do. Her skill, even in her infancy so remarkable, in various branches of female handiwork, was carried, not only by perseverance, but by invention and peculiar talent, to a marvellous and exquisite perfection. Her embroidery, especially in what was then more rare than at present, namely, — flowers on silk, — was much in request among the great *modistes* of London, to whom it found its way through the agency of Miss Semper. So that all this had enabled her for years to provide every necessary comfort of life for herself and her blind protector. And her care for the old man was beautiful in its minuteness, its vigilance. Wherever her heart was interested, there never seemed a deficiency of mind. Vaudemont was touched to see how much of affectionate and pitying respect she appeared to enjoy in the neighbourhood, especially among the humbler classes, — even the beggar who swept the crossings did not beg of *her*, but bade God bless her as she passed; and the rude, discontented artisan would draw himself from the wall and answer, with a softened brow, the smile with which the harmless one charmed his courtesy. In fact, whatever attraction she took from her youth, her beauty, her misfortune, and her affecting industry was heightened, in the eyes of the poorer neighbours, by many little traits of charity and kindness; many a sick

child had she tended, and many a breadless board had stolen something from the stock set aside for her father's grave.

"Don't you think," she once whispered to Vaudemont. "that God attends to us more if we are good to those who are sick and hungry?"

"Certainly we are taught to think so."

"Well, I'll tell you a secret, — don't tell again. Grand-papa once said that my father had done bad things; now if Fanny is good to those she can help, I think that God will hear her more kindly when she prays him to forgive what her father did. Do you think so too? Do say, — you are so wise!"

"Fanny, you are wiser than all of us; and I feel myself better and happier when I hear you speak."

There were, indeed, many moments when Vaudemont thought that her deficiencies of intellect might have been repaired long since by skilful culture and habitual companionship with those of her own age, — from which companionship, however, Fanny even when at school had shrunk aloof. At other moments there was something so absent and distracted about her, or so fantastic and incoherent, that Vaudemont, with the man's hard, worldly eye, read in it nothing but melancholy confusion. Nevertheless, if the skein of ideas was entangled, each thread in itself was a thread of gold.

Fanny's great object, her great ambition, her one hope, was a tomb for her supposed father. Whether from some of that early religion attached to the grave, which is most felt in Catholic countries, and which she had imbibed at the convent; or from her residence so near the burial-ground, and the affection with which she regarded the spot, — whatever the cause, she had cherished for some years, as young maidens usually cherish the desire of the Altar, the dream of the Gravestone. But the hoard was amassed so slowly! Now old Gawtreys was attacked by illness; now there was some little difficulty in the rent; now some fluctuation in the price of work; and now, and more often than all, some demand on her charity, which interfered with and drew from the pious savings. This was a sentiment in which her new friend sympathized deeply; for

he, too, remembered that his first gold had bought that humble stone which still preserved upon the earth the memory of his mother.

Meanwhile, days crept on, and no new violence was offered to Fanny. Vaudemont learned, then, by little and little — and Fanny's account was very confused — the nature of the danger she had run.

It seemed that one day, tempted by the fineness of the weather up the road that led from the suburb farther into the country, Fanny was stopped by a gentleman in a carriage, who accosted her, as she said, very kindly; and after several questions, which she answered with her usual unsuspecting innocence, learned her trade, insisted on purchasing some articles of work which she had at the moment in her basket, and promised to procure her a constant purchaser, upon much better terms than she had hitherto obtained, if she would call at the house of a Mrs. West, about a mile from the suburb towards London. This she promised to do, and this she did, according to the address he gave her. She was admitted to a lady more gayly dressed than Fanny had ever seen a lady before, — the gentleman was also present; they both loaded her with compliments, and bought her work at a price which seemed about to realize all the hopes of the poor girl as to the gravestone for William Gawtreys, — as if his evil fate pursued that wild man beyond the grave, and his very tomb was to be purchased by the gold of the polluter! The lady then appointed her to call again; but, meanwhile, she met Fanny in the streets, and while she was accosting her, it fortunately chanced that Miss Semper the milliner passed that way, turned round, looked hard at the lady, used very angry language to her, seized Fanny's hand, led her away while the lady slunk off, and told her that the said lady was a very bad woman, and that Fanny must never speak to her again. Fanny most cheerfully promised this. And in fact the lady, probably afraid, whether of the mob or the magistrates, never again came near her.

"And," said Fanny, "I gave the money they had both given to me to Miss Semper, who said she would send it back."

"You did right, Fanny; and as you made one promise to Miss Semper, so you must make me one, — never to stir from home again without me or some other person. No, no *other* person, — only me. I will give up everything else to go with you."

"Will you? Oh, yes. I promise! I used to like going alone, but that was before you came, brother."

And as Fanny kept her promise, it would have been a bold gallant indeed who would have ventured to molest her by the side of that stately and strong protector.

CHAPTER VI.

Timon. Each thing's a thief :

The laws, your curb and whip, in their rough power
Have unchecked theft.

The sweet degrees that this brief world affords,
To such as may the passive drugs of it
Freely command. — *Timon of Athens.*

On the day and at the hour fixed for the interview with the stranger who had visited Mr. Beaufort, Lord Lilburne was seated in the library of his brother-in-law; and before the elbow-chair, on which he lolled carelessly, stood our old friend Mr. Sharp, of Bow Street notability.

"Mr. Sharp," said the peer, "I have sent for you to do me little favour. I expect a man here who professes to give Mr. Beaufort, my brother-in-law, some information about a lawsuit. It is necessary to know the exact value of his evidence. I wish you to ascertain all particulars about him. Be so good as to seat yourself in the porter's chair in the hall; note him when he enters, unobserved yourself; but as he is probably a stranger to you, note him still more when he leaves the house; follow him at a distance; find out where he lives, whom he

associates with, where he visits, their names and directions, what his character and calling are, — in a word, everything you can, and report to me each evening. Dog him well, never lose sight of him, — you will be handsomely paid. You understand?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Sharp, "leave me alone, my lord. Been employed before by your lordship's brother-in-law. We knows what's what."

"I don't doubt it. To your post, — I expect him every moment."

And, in fact, Mr. Sharp had only just ensconced himself in the porter's chair when the stranger knocked at the door. In another moment he was shown in to Lord Lilburne.

"Sir," said his lordship, without rising, "be so good as to take a chair. Mr. Beaufort is obliged to leave town; he has asked me to see you, — I am one of his family, his wife is my sister; you may be as frank with me as with him, — more so, perhaps."

"I beg the fauvour of your name, sir," said the stranger, adjusting his collar.

"Yours first, — business is business."

"Well, then, Captain Smith."

"Of what regiment?"

"Half-pay."

"I am Lord Lilburne. Your name is Smith? Humph!" added the peer, looking over some notes before him; "I see it is also the name of the witness appealed to by Mrs. Morton, humph!"

At this remark, and still more at the look which accompanied it, the countenance, before impudent and complacent, of Captain Smith fell into visible embarrassment; he cleared his throat and said, with a little hesitation, —

"My lord, that witness is living!"

"No doubt of it, — witnesses never die where property is concerned and imposture intended."

At this moment the servant entered, and placed a little note, quaintly folded, before Lord Lilburne. He glanced at it in surprise, opened, and read as follows, in pencil: —

MY LORD, — I knows the man; take caer of him; he is as big a roge as ever stept; he was transported some three year back, and unless his time has been shortened by the Home, he's absent without leve. We used to call him Dashing Jerry. That ere youngster we went arter, by Mr. Bofort's wish, was a pall of his. Seuze the liberty I take.

J. SHARP.

While Lord Lilburne held this effusion to the candle, and spelled his way through it, Captain Smith, recovering his self-composure, thus proceeded, —

"Imposture, my lord! imposture! I really don't understand. Your lordship really seems so suspicious that it is quite uncomfortable. I am sure it is all the same to me; and if Mr. Beaufort does not think proper to see me himself, why I'd best make my bow."

And Captain Smith rose.

"Stay a moment, sir. What Mr. Beaufort may yet do, I cannot say; but I know this,—you stand charged of a very grave offence; and if your witness or witnesses—you may have fifty, for what I care—are equally guilty, so much the worse for them."

"My lord, I really don't comprehend."

"Then I will be more plain. I accuse you of devising an infamous falsehood for the purpose of extorting money. Let your witnesses appear in court, and I promise that you, they, and the young man, Mr. Morton, whose claim they set up, shall be indicted for conspiracy,—conspiracy, if accompanied (as in the case of your witnesses) with perjury, of the blackest die. Mr. Smith, I know you; and before ten o'clock to-morrow, I shall know also if you had his Majesty's leave to quit the colonies! Ah! I am plain enough now, I see."

And Lord Lilburne threw himself back in his chair, and coldly contemplated the white face and dismayed expression of the crestfallen captain. That most worthy person, after a pause of confusion, amaze, and fear, made an involuntary stride, with a menacing gesture, towards Lilburne; the peer quietly placed his hand on the bell.

"One moment more," said the latter; "if I ring this bell, it is to place you in custody. Let Mr. Beaufort but see you

here once again,—nay, let him but hear another word of this pretended lawsuit,—and you return to the colonies. Pshaw! Frown not at me, sir! A Bow Street officer is in the hall. Begone! no, stop one moment, and take a lesson in life. Never again attempt to threaten people of property and station. Around every rich man is a wall,—better not run your head against it.’

“But I swear solemnly,” cried the knave, with an emphasis so startling that it carried with it the appearance of truth, “that the marriage did take place.”

“And I say, no less solemnly, that any one who swears it in a court of law shall be prosecuted for perjury! Bah! you are a sorry rogue, after all!”

And with an air of supreme and half-compassionate contempt, Lord Lilburne turned away and stirred the fire. Captain Smith muttered and fumbled a moment with his gloves, then shrugged his shoulders and sneaked out.

That night Lord Lilburne again received his friends, and amongst his guests came Vaudemont. Lilburne was one who liked the study of character, especially the character of men wrestling against the world. Wholly free from every species of ambition, he seemed to reconcile himself to his apathy by examining into the disquietude, the mortification, the heart’s wear and tear, which are the lot of the ambitious. Like the spider in his hole, he watched with hungry pleasure the flies struggling in the web, through whose slimy labyrinth he walked with an easy safety. Perhaps one reason why he loved gaming was less from the joy of winning than the philosophical complacency with which he feasted on the emotions of those who lost,—always serene, and, except in debauch, always passionless,—Majendie, tracing the experiments of science in the agonies of some tortured dog, could not be more rapt in the science and more indifferent to the dog than Lord Lilburne, ruining a victim, in the analysis of human passions,—stoical in the writhings of the wretch whom he tranquilly dissected. He wished to win money of Vaudemont, to ruin this man, who presumed to be more generous than other people; to see a bold adventurer submitted to the wheel

of the Fortune which reigns in a pack of cards,—and all, of course, without the least hate to the man whom he then saw for the first time. On the contrary, he felt a respect for Vaudemont. Like most worldly men, Lord Lilburne was prepossessed in favour of those who seek to rise in life: and like men who have excelled in manly and athletic exercises, he was also prepossessed in favour of those who appeared fitted for the same success.

Liancourt took aside his friend, as Lord Lilburne was talking with his other guests,—

“I need not caution you, who never play, not to commit yourself to Lord Lilburne’s tender mercies; remember, he is an admirable player.”

“Nay,” answered Vaudemont, “I want to know this man; I have reasons, which alone induce me to enter his house. I can afford to venture something, because I wish to see if I can gain something for one dear to me. And for the rest,” he muttered, “I know him too well not to be on my guard.” With that he joined Lord Lilburne’s group, and accepted the invitation to the card-table. At supper, Vaudemont conversed more than was habitual to him; he especially addressed himself to his host, and listened, with great attention, to Lilburne’s caustic comments upon every topic successively started. And whether it was the art of De Vaudemont, or from an interest that Lord Lilburne took in studying what was to him a new character, or whether that, both men excelling peculiarly in all masculine accomplishments, their conversation was of a nature that was more attractive to themselves than to others, it so happened that they were still talking while the daylight already peered through the window-curtains.

“And I have outstayed all your guests,” said De Vaudemont, glancing round the emptied room.

“It is the best compliment you could pay me. Another night we can enliven our *tête-à-tête* with *écarté*,—though at your age, and with your appearance, I am surprised, Monsieur de Vaudemont, that you are fond of play. I should have thought that it was not in a pack of cards that you looked

for hearts. But perhaps you are *blasé* betimes of the *beau sexe*."

"Yet your lordship's devotion to it is, perhaps, as great now as ever?"

"Mine? No, not as ever. To different ages different degrees. At your age I wooed; at mine I purchase,—the better plan of the two; it does not take up half so much time."

"Your marriage, I think, Lord Lilburne, was not blessed with children. Perhaps sometimes you feel the want of them?"

"If I did, I could have them by the dozen. Other ladies have been more generous in that department than the late Lady Lilburne, Heaven rest her!"

"And," said Vaudemont, fixing his eyes with some earnestness on his host, "if you were really persuaded that you had a child, or perhaps a grandchild,—the mother one whom you loved in your first youth,—a child affectionate, beautiful, and especially needing your care and protection, would you not suffer that child, though illegitimate, to supply to you the want of filial affection?"

"Filial affection, *mon cher!*" repeated Lord Lilburne, "needing my care and protection! Pshaw! In other words, would I give board and lodging to some young vagabond who was good enough to say he was son to Lord Lilburne?"

"But if you were *convinced* that the claimant were your son, or perhaps your daughter,—a tenderer name of the two, and a more helpless claimant?"

"My dear Monsieur de Vaudemont, you are doubtless a man of gallantry and of the world. If the children whom the law forces on one are, nine times out of ten, such damnable plagues, judge if one would father those whom the law permits us to disown! Natural children are the pariahs of the world, and *I*—am one of the Brahmins."

"But," persisted Vaudemont, "forgive me if I press the question further. Perhaps I seek from your wisdom a guide to my own conduct. Suppose, then, a man had loved, had wronged, the mother; suppose that in the child he saw one

who, without his aid, might be exposed to every curse with which the pariahs (true, the *pariahs*!) of the world are too often visited, and who *with* his aid might become, as age advanced, his companion, his nurse, his comforter —”

“Tush!” interrupted Lilburne, with some impatience; “I know not how our conversation fell on such a topic, but if you really ask my opinion in reference to any case in practical life, you shall have it. Look you, then, Monsieur de Vaudemont, no man has studied the art of happiness more than I have; and I will tell you the great secret,—have as few ties as possible. Nurse! Pooh! you or I could hire one by the week a thousand times more useful and careful than a bore of a child. Comforter! A man of mind never wants comfort. And there is no such thing as sorrow while we have health and money, and don’t care a straw for anybody in the world. If you choose to love people, *their* health and circumstances, if either go wrong, can fret you: that opens many avenues to pain. Never *live* alone, but always *feel* alone. You think this unamiable: possibly. I am no hypocrite, and, for my part, I never affect to be anything but what I am,—John Lilburne.”

As the peer thus spoke, Vaudemont, leaning against the door, contemplated him with a strange mixture of interest and disgust. “And John Lilburne is thought a great man, and William Gawtreys was a great rogue. You don’t conceal your heart?—no, I understand. Wealth and power have no need of hypocrisy: you are the man of vice; Gawtreys, the man of crime. You never sin against the law; he was a felon by his trade. And the felon saved from vice the child, and from want the grandchild (*your* flesh and blood), whom you disown: which will Heaven consider the worse man? No, poor Fanny! I see I am wrong. If he would own you, I would not give you up to the ice of such a soul. Better the blind man than the dead heart!”

“Well, Lord Lilburne,” said De Vaudemont aloud, shaking off his reverie, “I must own that your philosophy seems to me the wisest for yourself. For a poor man it might be different, —the poor need affection.”

"Ay, the poor, certainly," said Lord Lilburne, with an air of patronizing candour.

"And I will own further," continued De Vaudemont, "that I have willingly lost my money in return for the instruction I have received in hearing you converse."

"You are kind; come and take your revenge next Thursday. Adieu."

As Lord Lilburne undressed, and his valet attended him, he said to that worthy functionary,—

"So you have not been able to make out the name of the stranger,—the new lodger you tell me of?"

"No, my lord. They only say he is a very fine-looking man."

"You have not seen him?"

"No, my lord. What do you wish me now to do?"

"Humph! Nothing at this moment! you manage things so badly, you might get me into a scrape. I never do anything which the law or the police, or even the newspapers, can get hold of. I must think of some other way. Humph! I never give up what I once commence, and I never fail in what I undertake! If life had been worth what fools trouble it with,—business and ambition,—I suppose I should have been a great man with a very bad liver. Ha! ha! I alone, of all the world, ever found out what the world was good for! Draw the curtains, Dykeman."

CHAPTER VII.

Org. Welcome, thou ice that sitt'st about *his* heart!
No heat can ever thaw thee! — *FORD: Broken Heart.*

Nearch. Honourable infamy! — *Ibid.*

Amjc. Her tenderness hath yet deserved no rigour,
So to be crossed by fate!

Arm. You misapply, sir,
With favour let me speak it, what Apollo
Hath clouded in dim sense! — *Ibid.*

IF Vaudemont had fancied that, considering the age and poverty of Simon, it was his duty to see whether Fanny's not more legal, but more natural protector were, indeed, the unredeemed and unmalleable egotist which Gawtrey had painted him, the conversation of one night was sufficient to make him abandon forever the notion of advancing her claims upon Lord Lilburne. But Philip had another motive in continuing his acquaintance with that personage. The sight of his mother's grave had recalled to him the image of that lost brother over whom he had vowed to watch. And despite the deep sense of wronged affection with which he yet remembered the cruel letter that had contained the last tidings of Sidney, Philip's heart clung with undying fondness to that fair shape associated with all the happy recollections of childhood; and his conscience as well as his love asked him, each time that he passed the churchyard, "Will you make no effort to obey that last prayer of the mother who consigned her darling to your charge?" Perhaps, had Philip been in want, or had the name he now bore been sullied by his conduct, he might have shrunk from seeking one whom he might injure, but could not serve. But though not rich, he had more than enough for tastes as hardy and simple as any to which soldier of fortune ever limited his desires; and he thought, with a sentiment of just and noble pride, that the name which Eugénie

had forced upon him had been borne spotless as the ermine through the trials and vicissitudes he had passed since he had assumed it. Sidney could give him nothing, and therefore it was his duty to seek Sidney out. Now, he had always believed in his heart that the Beauforts were acquainted with a secret which he more and more pined to penetrate. He would, for Sidney's sake, smother his hate to the Beauforts; he would not reject their acquaintance if thrown in his way; nay, secure in his change of name and his altered features from all suspicion on their part, he would seek that acquaintance in order to find his brother and fulfil Catherine's last commands. His intercourse with Lilburne would necessarily bring him easily into contact with Lilburne's family. And in this thought he did not reject the invitations pressed on him. He felt, too, a dark and absorbing interest in examining a man who was in himself the incarnation of the World,—the World of Art, the World as the Preacher paints it, the hollow, sensual, sharp-witted, self-wrapped WORLD, the World that is all for this life, and thinks of no Future and no God!

Lord Lilburne was, indeed, a study for deep contemplation,—a study to perplex the ordinary thinker, and task to the utmost the analysis of more profound reflection. William Gawtreys had possessed no common talents; *he* had discovered that his life had been one mistake. Lord Lilburne's intellect was far keener than Gawtreys's, and *he* had never made, and if he had lived to the age of Old Parr, never would have made a similar discovery. He never wrestled against a law, though he slipped through all laws! And he knew no remorse, for he knew no fear. Lord Lilburne had married early, and long survived, a lady of fortune, the daughter of the then Premier,—the best match, in fact, of his day. And for one very brief period of his life he had suffered himself to enter into the field of politics,—the only ambition common with men of equal rank. He showed talents that might have raised one so gifted by circumstance to any height, and then retired at once into his old habits and old system of pleasure. "I wished to try," said he once, "if fame was worth one headache, and I have convinced myself that the man who can

sacrifice the bone in his mouth to the shadow of the bone in the water is a fool." From that time he never attended the House of Lords, and declared himself of no political opinions one way or the other. Nevertheless, the world had a general belief in his powers, and Vaudemont reluctantly subscribed to the world's verdict. Yet he had done nothing, he had read but little, he laughed at the world to its face,—and that last was, after all, the main secret of his ascendancy over those who were drawn into his circle. That contempt of the world placed the world at his feet. His sardonic and polished indifference; his professed code that there was no life worth caring for but his own life; his exemption from all cant, prejudice, and disguise; the frigid lubricity with which he glided out of the grasp of the Conventional, whenever it so pleased him, without shocking the Decorums whose sense is in their ear, and who are not roused by the deed but by the noise,—all this had in it the marrow and essence of a system triumphant with the vulgar; for little minds give importance to the man who gives importance to nothing. Lord Lilburne's authority, not in matters of taste alone, but in those which the world calls judgment and common-sense, was regarded as an oracle. He cared not a straw for the ordinary baubles that attract his order; he had refused both an earldom and the garter, and this was often quoted in his honour. But you only try a man's virtue when you offer him something that he covets. The earldom and the garter were to Lord Lilburne no more tempting inducements than a doll or a skipping-rope; had you offered him an infallible cure for the gout, or an antidote against old age, you might have hired him as your lackey on your own terms. Lord Lilburne's next heir was the son of his only brother, a person entirely dependent on his uncle. Lord Lilburne allowed him £1,000 a year, and kept him always abroad in a diplomatic situation. He looked upon his successor as a man who wanted power, but not inclination, to become his assassin.

Though he lived sumptuously and grudged himself nothing, Lord Lilburne was far from an extravagant man. He might, indeed, be considered close; for he knew how much of com-

fort and consideration he owed to his money, and valued it accordingly; he knew the best speculations and the best investments. If he took shares in an American canal, you might be sure that the shares would soon be double in value; if he purchased an estate, you might be certain it was a bargain. This pecuniary tact and success necessarily augmented his fame for wisdom.

He had been in early life a successful gambler, and some suspicions of his fair play had been noised abroad; but, as has been recently seen in the instance of a man of rank equal to Lilburne's, though perhaps of less acute if more cultivated intellect, it is long before the pigeon will turn round upon a falcon of breed and mettle. The rumours, indeed, were so vague as to carry with them no weight. During the middle of his career, when in the full flush of health and fortune, he had renounced the gaming-table. Of late years, as advancing age made time more heavy, he had resumed the resource, and with all his former good luck. The money-market, the table, the sex, constituted the other occupations and amusements with which Lord Lilburne filled up his rosy leisure.

Another way by which this man had acquired reputation for ability was this,—he never pretended to any branch of knowledge of which he was ignorant, any more than to any virtue in which he was deficient. Honesty itself was never more free from quackery or deception than was this embodied and walking VICE. If the world chose to esteem him, he did not buy its opinion by imposture. No man ever saw Lord Lilburne's name in a public subscription, whether for a new church, or a Bible Society, or a distressed family; no man ever heard of his doing one generous, benevolent, or kindly action; no man was ever startled by one philanthropic, pious, or amiable sentiment from those mocking lips. Yet, in spite of all this, John Lord Lilburne was not only esteemed but liked by the world, and set up in the chair of its Rhadamanthuses. In a word he seemed to Vaudemont, and he was so in reality, a brilliant example of the might of Circumstance,—an instance of what may be done in the way of reputation and influence by a rich, well-born man to whom the will a

kingdom is. A little of genius, and Lord Lilburne would have made his vices notorious and his deficiencies glaring; a little of heart, and his habits would have led him into countless follies and discreditable scrapes. It was the lead and the stone that he carried about him that preserved his equilibrium, no matter which way the breeze blew. But all his qualities, positive or negative, would have availed him nothing without that position which enabled him to take his ease in that inn, the world,—which presented, to every detection of his want of intrinsic nobleness, the irreproachable respectability of a high name, a splendid mansion, and a rent-roll without a flaw. Vaudemont drew comparisons between Lilburne and Gawtreys, and he comprehended at last why one was a low rascal and the other a great man.

Although it was but a few days after their first introduction to each other, Vaudemont had been twice to Lord Lilburne's, and their acquaintance was already on an easy footing, when one afternoon as the former was riding through the streets towards H——, he met the peer mounted on a stout cob, which from its symmetrical strength, pure English breed, and exquisite grooming showed something of those sporting tastes for which in earlier life Lord Lilburne had been noted.

"Why, Monsieur de Vaudemont, what brings you to this part of the town,—curiosity and the desire to explore?"

"That might be natural enough in me; but you, who know London so well,—rather what brings *you* here?"

"Why, I am returned from a long ride. I have had symptoms of a fit of the gout, and been trying to keep it off by exercise. I have been to a cottage that belongs to me, some miles from town,—a pretty place enough by the way; you must come and see me there next month. I shall fill the house for a *battue*! I have some tolerable covers—you are a good shot, I suppose?"

"I have not practised, except with a rifle, for some years."

"That's a pity; for as I think a week's shooting once a year quite enough, I fear that your visit to me at Fernside may not be sufficiently long to put your hand in."

"Fernside!"

"Yes; is the name familiar to you?"

"I think I have heard it before. Did your lordship purchase or inherit it?"

"I bought it of my brother-in-law. It belonged to *his* brother,—a gay, wild sort of fellow, who broke his neck over a six-barred gate; through that gate my friend Robert walked the same day into a very fine estate!"

"I have heard so. The late Mr. Beaufort, then, left no children?"

"Yes; two. But they came into the world in the primitive way in which Mr. Owen wishes us all to come,—too naturally for the present state of society, and Mr. Owen's parallelogram was not ready for them. By the way, one of them disappeared at Paris; you never met with him, I suppose?"

"Under what name?"

"Morton."

"Morton! hem! What Christian name?"

"Philip."

"Philip! no. But did Mr. Beaufort do nothing for the young men? I think I have heard somewhere that he took compassion on *one* of them."

"Have you? Ah, my brother-in-law is precisely one of those excellent men of whom the world always speaks well. No; he would very willingly have served either or both the boys, but the mother refused all his overtures and went to law, I fancy. The elder of these bastards turned out a sad fellow, and the younger—I don't know exactly where he is, but no doubt with one of his mother's relations. You seem to interest yourself in natural children, my dear Vaudemont."

"Perhaps you have heard that people have doubted if I were a natural son?"

"Ah, I understand now. But are you going? I was in hopes you would have turned back my way, and —"

"You are very good; but I have a particular appointment, and I am now too late. Good morning, Lord Lilburne."

Sidney with one of his mother's relations! Returned, perhaps, to the Mortons! How had he never *before* chanced on a conjecture so probable? He would go at once!—that very

night he would go to the house from which he had taken his brother. At least, and at the worst, they might give him some clew.

Buoyed with this hope and this resolve, he rode hastily to H——, to announce to Simon and Fanny that he should not return to them, perhaps, for two or three days. As he entered the suburb, he drew up by the statuary of whom he had purchased his mother's gravestone.

The artist of the melancholy trade was at work in his yard.

"Ho, there!" said Vaudemont, looking over the low railing; "is the tomb I have ordered nearly finished?"

"Why, sir, as you were so anxious for despatch, and as it would take a long time to get a new one ready, I thought of giving you this, which is finished all but the inscription. It was meant for Miss Deborah Primme; but her nephew and heir called on me yesterday to say that as the poor lady died worth less by £5,000 than he had expected, he thought a handsome wooden tomb would do as well, if I could get rid of this for him. It is a beauty, sir. It will look so cheerful—"

"Well, that will do; and you can place it now where I told you."

"In three days, sir."

"So be it." And he rode on, muttering, "Fanny, your pious wish will be fulfilled. But flowers—will they suit *that* stone?"

He put up his horse, and walked through the lane to Simon's.

As he approached the house, he saw Fanny's bright eyes at the window. She was watching his return. She hastened to open the door to him, and the world's wanderer felt what music there is in the footstep, what summer there is in the smile, of *Welcome!*

"My dear Fanny," he said, affected by her joyous greeting, "it makes my heart warm to see you. I have brought you a present from town. When I was a boy, I remember that my poor mother was fond of singing some simple songs, which often, somehow or other, come back to me, when I see and

hear you. I fancied you would understand and like them as well at least as I do — for Heaven knows (he added to himself) my ear is dull enough generally to the jingle of rhyme;” and he placed in her hands a little volume of those exquisite songs in which Burns has set Nature to music.

“Oh, you are so kind, brother,” said Fanny, with tears swimming in her eyes, and she kissed the book.

After their simple meal, Vaudemont broke to Fanny and Simon the intelligence of his intended departure for a few days. Simon heard it with the silent apathy into which, except on rare occasions, his life had settled; but Fanny turned away her face and wept.

“It is but for a day or two, Fanny.”

“An hour is very, very long sometimes,” said the girl, shaking her head mournfully.

“Come, I have a little time yet left, and the air is mild. You have not been out to-day; shall we walk —”

“Hem!” interrupted Simon, clearing his throat, and seeming to start into sudden animation; “had not you better settle the board and lodging before you go?”

“Oh, Grandfather!” cried Fanny, springing to her feet, with *such* a blush upon her face.

“Nay, child,” said Vaudemont, laughingly, “your grandfather only anticipates me. But do not talk of board and lodging; Fanny is as a sister to me, and our purse is in common.”

“I should like to feel a sovereign,—just to *feel* it,” muttered Simon, in a sort of apologetic tone that was really pathetic; and as Vaudemont scattered some coins on the table, the old man clawed them up, chuckling and talking to himself; and rising with great alacrity, hobbled out of the room like a raven carrying some cunning theft to its hiding-place.

This was so amusing to Vaudemont that he burst out fairly into an uncontrollable laughter. Fanny looked at him, humbled and wondering for some moments; and then, creeping to him, put her hand gently on his arm and said,—

“Don’t laugh! it pains me. It was not nice in Grandpapa; but—but it does not mean anything. It—it—don’t laugh —Fanny feels so sad!”

"Well, you are right. Come, put on your bonnet, we will go out."

Fanny obeyed; but with less ready delight than usual. And they took their way through lanes over which hung, still in the cool air, the leaves of the yellow autumn.

Fanny was the first to break silence.

"Do you know," she said timidly, "that people here think me very silly? Do you think so too?"

Vaudemont was startled by the simplicity of the question, and hesitated. Fanny looked up in his dark face anxiously and inquiringly.

"Well," she said, "you don't answer!"

"My dear Fanny, there are some things in which I could wish you less childlike and, perhaps, less charming. Those strange snatches of song, for instance!"

"What! do you not like me to sing? It is my way of talking."

"Yes; sing, pretty one! But sing something that we can understand,—sing the songs I have given you, if you will. And now may I ask why you put to me that question?"

"I have forgotten," said Fanny, absently, and looking down.

Now, at that instant, as Philip Vaudemont bent over the exceeding sweetness of that young face, a sudden thrill shot through his heart, and he too became silent, and lost in thought. Was it possible that there could creep into his breast a wilder affection for this creature than that of tenderness and pity? He was startled as the idea crossed him. He shrank from it as a profanation, as a crime, as a frenzy. He with his fate so uncertain and chequered,—he to link himself with one so helpless, he to debase the very poetry that clung to the mental temperament of this pure being with the feelings which every fair face may awaken to every coarse heart,—to *love Fanny!* No, it was impossible! For what could he love in her but beauty, which the very spirit had forgotten to guard? And she—could she even know what love was? He despised himself for even admitting such a thought; and with that iron and hardy vigour which belonged to his mind,

resolved to watch closely against every fancy that would pass the fairy boundary which separated Fanny from the world of women.

He was roused from this self-commune by an abrupt exclamation from his companion.

"Oh, I recollect now why I asked you that question. There is one thing that always puzzles me,—I want you to explain it. Why does everything in life depend upon money? You see even my poor grandfather forgot how good you are to us both, when—when— Ah, I don't understand; it pains, it puzzles me!"

"Fanny, look there,—no, to the left,—you see that old woman in rags crawling wearily along; turn now to the right,—you see that fine house glancing through the trees, with a carriage and four at the gates? The difference between that old woman and the owner of that house is—Money; and who shall blame your grandfather for liking Money?"

Fanny understood; and while the wise man thus moralized, the girl whom his very compassion so haughtily condemned moved away to the old woman to do her little best to smooth down those disparities from which wisdom and moralizing never deduct a grain! Vaudemont felt this as he saw her glide towards the beggar; but when she came bounding back to him, she had forgotten his dislike to her songs, and was chanting, in the glee of the heart that a kind act had made glad, one of her own impromptu melodies.

Vaudemont turned away. Poor Fanny had unconsciously decided his self-conquest; she guessed not what passed within him, but she suddenly recollected what he had said to her about her songs, and fancied him displeased.

"Ah, I will never do it again. Brother, don't turn away!"

"But we must go home. Hark! the clock strikes seven,—I have no time to lose. And you will promise me never to stir out till I return?"

"I shall have no heart to stir out," said Fanny, sadly; and then in a more cheerful voice, she added, "And I shall sing the songs you like before you come back again!"

CHAPTER VIII.

WELL did they know that service all by rote ;

Some singing loud as if they had complained,
Some with their notes another manner feigned.

CHAUCER: *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, modernized
by WORDSWORTH. — HORNE'S Edition.

AND once more, sweet Winandermere, we are on the banks of thy happy lake! The softest ray of the soft clear sun of early autumn trembled on the fresh waters, and glanced through the leaves of the limes and willows that were reflected—distinct as a home for the Naiads—beneath the limpid surface. You might hear in the bushes the young blackbirds trilling their first untutored notes; and the graceful dragonfly, his wings glittering in the translucent sunshine, darted to and fro the reeds gathered here and there in the mimic bays that broke the shelving marge of the grassy shore.

And by that grassy shore, and beneath those shadowy limes, sat the young lovers. It was the very place where Spencer had first beheld Camilla. And now they were met to say "Farewell!"

"Oh, Camilla!" said he, with great emotion, and eyes that swam in tears, "be firm, be true. You know how my whole life is wrapped up in your love. You go amidst scenes where all will tempt you to forget me; I linger behind in those which are consecrated by your remembrance, which will speak to me every hour of you. Camilla, since you do love me—you do, do you not?—since you have confessed it, since your parents have consented to our marriage, provided only that your love last (for of mine there can be no doubt) for one year,—one terrible year,—shall I not trust you as truth itself? And yet how darkly I despair at times!"

Camilla innocently took the hands that, clasped together, were raised to her, as if in supplication, and pressed them kindly between her own.

"Do not doubt me; never doubt my affection. Has not my father consented? Reflect, it is but a year's delay!"

"A year! can you speak thus of a year, — a whole year? Not to see, not to hear you for a whole year, except in my dreams! And if at the end your parents waver? Your father — I distrust him still. If this delay is but meant to wean you from me, if at the end there are new excuses found, if they then, for some cause or other not now foreseen, still refuse their assent? You — may I not still look to *you*?"

Camilla sighed heavily; and turning her meek face on her lover, said timidly, "Never think that so short a time can make me unfaithful, and do not suspect that my father will break his promise."

"But, if he does, you will still be mine."

"Ah, Charles, how could you esteem me as a wife if I were to tell you I could forget I am a daughter?"

This was said so touchingly, and with so perfect a freedom from all affectation, that her lover could only reply by covering her hand with his kisses; and it was not till after a pause that he continued passionately, —

"You do but show me how much deeper is my love than yours. You can never dream how I love you. But I do not ask you to love me as well, — it would be impossible. My life from my earliest childhood has been passed in these solitudes, — a happy life, though tranquil and monotonous, till you suddenly broke upon it. You seemed to me the living form of the very poetry I had worshipped, — so bright, so heavenly; I loved you from the very first moment that we met. I am not like other men of my age. I have no pursuit, no occupation, — nothing to abstract me from your thought. And I love you so purely, so devotedly, Camilla. I have never known even a passing fancy for another. You are the first — the only woman — it ever seemed to me possible to love. You are my Eve, your presence my paradise! Think how *sad* I shall be when you are gone, how I shall visit every

spot your footstep has hallowed, how I shall count every moment till the year is past!"

While he thus spoke, he had risen in that restless agitation which belongs to great emotion; and Camilla now rose also, and said soothingly, as she laid her hand on his shoulder with tender but modest frankness, "And shall I not also think of you? I am sad to feel that you will be so much alone, — no sister, no brother!"

"Do not grieve for that. The memory of you will be dearer to me than comfort from all else. And you *will* be true!"

Camilla made no answer by words, but her eyes and her colour spoke. And in that moment, while plighting eternal truth, they forgot that they were about to part!

Meanwhile, in a room in the house which, screened by the foliage, was only partially visible where the lovers stood, sat Mr. Robert Beaufort and Mr. Spencer.

"I assure you, sir," said the former, "that I am not insensible to the merits of your nephew, and to the very handsome proposals you make; still I cannot consent to abridge the time I have named. They are both very young. What is a year?"

"It is a long time when it is a year of suspense," said the recluse, shaking his head.

"It is a longer time when it is a year of domestic dissension and repentance. And it is a very true proverb, — 'Marry in haste and repent at leisure.' No! If at the end of the year the young people continue of the same mind, and no unforeseen circumstances occur —"

"No unforeseen circumstances, Mr. Beaufort! — that is a new condition; it is a very vague phrase."

"My dear sir, it is hard to please you. Unforeseen circumstances," said the wary father, with a wise look, "mean circumstances that we don't foresee at present. I assure you that I have no intention to trifle with you, and I shall be sincerely happy in so respectable a connection."

"The young people may write to each other?"

"Why, I'll consult Mrs. Beaufort. At all events, it must not be very often, and Camilla is well brought up, and will

show all the letters to her mother. I don't much like a correspondence of that nature. It often leads to unpleasant results; if, for instance — ”

“If what?”

“Why, if the parties change their minds, and my girl were to marry another. It is not prudent in matters of business, my dear sir, to put down anything on paper that can be avoided.”

Mr. Spencer opened his eyes. “Matters of business, Mr. Beaufort!”

“Well, is not marriage a matter of business, and a very grave matter too? More lawsuits about marriage and settlements, etc., than I like to think of. But to change the subject: you have never heard anything more of those young men, you say?”

“No,” said Mr. Spencer, rather inaudibly, and looking down.

“And it is your firm impression that the elder one, Philip, is dead?”

“I don't doubt it.”

“That was a very vexatious and improper lawsuit their mother brought against me. Do you know that some wretched impostor who, it appears, is a convict broke loose before his time, has threatened me with another, on the part of one of those young men? You never heard anything of it, eh?”

“Never, upon my honour.”

“And, of course, you would not countenance so villanous an attempt?”

“Certainly not.”

“Because *that* would break off our contract at once. But you are too much a gentleman and a man of honour. Forgive me so improper a question. As for the younger Mr. Morton, I have no ill-feeling against him. But the elder! Oh, a thorough reprobate! a very alarming character! I could have nothing to do with any member of the family while the elder lived; it would only expose me to every species of insult and imposition. And now I think we have left our young friends alone long enough.

"But stay, to prevent future misunderstanding, I may as well read over again the heads of the arrangement you honour me by proposing. You agree to settle your fortune after your decease, amounting to £23,000 and your house, with twenty-five acres, one rood, and two poles, more or less, upon your nephew and my daughter, jointly, — remainder to their children. Certainly, without offence, in a worldly point of view, Camilla might do better. Still, you are so very respectable, and you speak so handsomely, that I cannot touch upon that point; and I own, that though there is a large nominal rent-roll attached to Beaufort Court (indeed, there is not a finer property in the county), yet there are many incumbrances, and ready money would not be convenient to me. Arthur — poor fellow, a very fine young man, sir — is, as I have told you in perfect confidence, a little imprudent and lavish. In short, your offer to dispense with any dowry is extremely liberal, and proves your nephew is actuated by no mercenary feelings; such conduct prepossesses me highly in your favour and his too."

Mr. Spencer bowed, and the great man rising, with a stiff affectation of kindly affability, put his arm into the uncle's, and strolled with him across the lawn towards the lovers. And such is life, — love on the lawn and settlements in the parlour.

The lover was the first to perceive the approach of the elder parties. And a change came over his face as he saw the dry aspect and marked the stealthy stride of his future father-in-law; for then there flashed across him a dreary reminiscence of early childhood, — the happy evening when, with his joyous father, that grave and ominous aspect was first beheld; and then the dismal burial, the funereal sables, the carriage at the door, and he himself clinging to the cold uncle to ask him to say a word of comfort to the mother, who now slept far away. "Well, my young friend," said Mr. Beaufort, patronizingly, "your good uncle and myself are quite agreed, — a little time for reflection, that's all. Oh, I don't think the worse of you for wishing to abridge it. But papas must be papas."

There was so little jocular about that sedate man that this attempt at jovial good-humour seemed harsh and grating, — the hinges of that wily mouth wanted oil for a hearty smile.

"Come, don't be faint-hearted, Mr. Charles. 'Faint heart' — you know the proverb. You must stay and dine with us. We return to-morrow to town. I should tell you that I received this morning a letter from my son Arthur, announcing his return from Baden, so we must give him the meeting, — a very joyful one you may guess. We have not seen him these three years. Poor fellow! he says he has been very ill and the waters have ceased to do him any good; but a little quiet and country air at Beaufort Court will set him up, I hope."

Thus running on about his son, then about his shooting, about Beaufort Court and its splendours, about Parliament and its fatigues, about the last French Revolution and the last English election, about Mrs. Beaufort and her good qualities and bad health, — about, in short, everything relating to himself, some things relating to the public, and nothing that related to the persons to whom his conversation was directed, Mr. Robert Beaufort wore away half an hour, when the Spencers took their leave, promising to return to dinner.

"Charles," said Mr. Spencer, as the boat, which the young man rowed, bounded over the water towards their quiet home, "Charles, I dislike these Beauforts!"

"Not the daughter?"

"No, she is beautiful, and seems good; not so handsome as your poor mother, but who ever was?" Here Mr. Spencer sighed, and repeated some lines from Shenstone.

"Do you think Mr. Beaufort suspects in the least who I am?"

"Why, that puzzles me; I rather think he does."

"And that is the cause of the delay? I knew it."

"No, on the contrary, I incline to think he has some kindly feeling to you, though not to your brother, and that it is such a feeling that made him consent to your marriage. He sifted me very closely as to what I knew of the young Mortons, — observed that you were very handsome, and that he had fancied at first that he had seen you before."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; and looked hard at me while he spoke; and said more than once, significantly, 'So his name is Charles?' He talked about some attempt at imposture and litigation, but that was, evidently, merely invented to sound me about your brother, — whom, of course, he spoke ill of, impressing on me three or four times that he would never have anything to say to any of the family while Philip lived."

"And you told him," said the young man, hesitatingly, and with a deep blush of shame over his face, "that you were persuaded — that is, that you believed Philip was — was —"

"Was dead! Yes, — and without confusion; for the more I reflect, the more I think he must be dead. At all events, you may be sure that he is dead to us, that we shall never hear more of him."

"Poor Philip!"

"Your feelings are natural, — they are worthy of your excellent heart; but remember what would have become of you if you had stayed with him!"

"True!" said the brother, with a slight shudder, — "a career of suffering, crime, perhaps the gibbet! Ah, what do I owe you!"

The dinner-party at Mr. Beaufort's that day was constrained and formal, though the host, in unusual good humour, sought to make himself agreeable. Mrs. Beaufort, languid and afflicted with headache, said little. The two Spencers were yet more silent. But the younger sat next to her he loved, and both hearts were full; and in the evening they contrived to creep apart into a corner by the window, through which the starry heavens looked kindly on them. They conversed in whispers, with long pauses between each; and at times Camilla's tears flowed silently down her cheeks, and were followed by the false smiles intended to cheer her lover.

Time did not fly, but crept on breathlessly and heavily. And then came the last parting — formal, cold — before witness; but the lover could not restrain his emotion, and the hard father heard his suppressed sob as he closed the door.

It will now be well to explain the cause of Mr. Beaufort's

heightened spirits, and the motives of his conduct with respect to his daughter's suitor.

This, perhaps, can be best done by laying before the reader the following letters that passed between Mr. Beaufort and Lord Lilburne.

FROM LORD LILBURN TO ROBERT BEAUFORT, ESQ., M.P.

DEAR BEAUFORT, — I think I have settled, pretty satisfactorily, your affair with your unwelcome visitor. The first thing it seemed to me necessary to do, was to learn exactly what and who he was, and with what parties that could annoy you he held intercourse. I sent for Sharp, the Bow Street officer, and placed him in the hall to mark and afterwards to dog and keep watch on your new friend. The moment the latter entered I saw at once from his dress and his address that he was a 'scamp,' and thought it highly inexpedient to place you in his power by any money transactions. While talking with him, Sharp sent in a billet containing his recognition of our gentleman as a transported convict.

I acted accordingly; soon saw, from the fellow's manner, that he had returned before his time; and sent him away with a promise, which you may be sure he believes will be kept, that if he molest you further, he shall return to the colonies, and that if his lawsuit proceed, his witness or witnesses shall be indicted for conspiracy and perjury. Make your mind easy so far. For the rest, I own to you that I think what he says probable enough: but my object in setting Sharp to watch him is to learn what other parties he sees. And if there be really anything formidable in his proofs or witnesses, it is with those other parties I advise you to deal. Never transact business with the go-between if you can with the principal. Remember, the two young men are the persons to arrange with after all. They must be poor, and therefore easily dealt with; for if poor, they will think a bird in the hand worth two in the bush of a lawsuit.

If, through Mr. Spencer, you can learn anything of either of the young men, do so; and try and open some channel through which you can always establish a communication with them, if necessary. Perhaps, by learning their early history, you may learn something to put them into your power.

I have had a twinge of the gout this morning, and am likely, I fear, to be laid up for some weeks.

Yours truly,

LILBURN.

P. S. — Sharp has just been here. He followed the man, who calls himself 'Captain Smith,' to a house in Lambeth, where he lodges, and

from which he did not stir till midnight, when Sharp ceased his watch. On renewing it this morning, he found that the Captain had gone off to what place Sharp has not yet discovered.

Burn this immediately.

FROM ROBERT BEAUFORT, ESQ., M.P., TO THE LORD LILBURNE

DEAR LILBURNE, — Accept my warmest thanks for your kindness; you have done admirably, and I do not see that I have anything further to apprehend. I suspect that it was an entire fabrication on that man's part, and your firmness has foiled his wicked designs. Only think, I have discovered — I am sure of it — one of the Mortons, — and he, too, though the younger, yet in all probability the sole pretender the fellow could set up. You remember that the child Sidney had disappeared mysteriously; you remember also, how much that Mr. Spencer had interested himself in finding out the same Sidney. Well, this gentleman at the Lakes is, as we suspected, the identical Mr. Spencer, and his *soi-disant* nephew, Camilla's suitor, is assuredly no other than the lost Sidney. The moment I saw the young man I recognized him, for he is very little altered, and has a great look of his mother into the bargain. Concealing my more than suspicions, I, however, took care to sound Mr. Spencer (a very poor soul), and his manner was so embarrassed as to leave no doubt of the matter; but in asking him what he had heard of the brothers, I had the satisfaction of learning that, in all human probability, the elder is dead, — of this Mr. Spencer seems convinced. I also assured myself that neither Spencer nor the young man had the remotest connection with our Captain Smith, nor any idea of litigation. This is very satisfactory, you will allow. And now, I hope you will approve of what I have done. I find that young Morton, or Spencer, as he is called, is desperately enamoured of Camilla. He seems a meek, well-conditioned, amiable young man; writes poetry, — in short, rather weak than otherwise. I have demanded a year's delay, to allow mutual trial and reflection. This gives us the channel for constant information which you advise me to establish, and I shall have the opportunity to learn if the impostor makes any communication to them, or if there be any news of the brother. If by any trick or chicanery (for I will never believe that there was a marriage) a lawsuit that might be critical or hazardous can be cooked up, I can, I am sure, make such terms with Sidney, through his love for my daughter, as would effectively and permanently secure me from all further trouble and machinations in regard to my property. And if, during the year, we convince ourselves that after all there is not a leg of law for any claimant to stand on, I may be guided by other circumstances how far I shall finally accept or reject the suit.

That must depend on any other views we may then form for Camilla, and I shall not allow a hint of such an engagement to get abroad. At the worst, as Mr. Spencer's heir, it is not so very bad a match, seeing that they dispense with all marriage portion, etc., — a proof how easily they can be managed. I have not let Mr. Spencer see that I have discovered his secret, — I can do that or not, according to circumstances, hereafter; neither have I said anything of my discovery to Mrs. B. or Camilla. At present, 'Least said soonest mended.' I heard from Arthur to-day. He is on his road home, and we hasten to town sooner than we expected, to meet him. He complains still of his health. We shall all go down to Beaufort Court. I write this at night, the pretended uncle and sham nephew having just gone. But though we start to-morrow, you will get this a day or two before we arrive, as Mrs. Beaufort's health renders short stages necessary. I really do hope that Arthur, also, will not be an invalid, poor fellow! one in a family is quite enough; and I find Mrs. Beaufort's delicacy very inconvenient, especially in moving about and in keeping up one's county connections. A young man's health, however, is soon restored. I am very sorry to hear of your gout, except that it carries off all other complaints. I am very well, thank Heaven; indeed, my health has been much better of late years: Beaufort Court agrees with me so well! The more I reflect, the more I am astonished at the monstrous and wicked impudence of that fellow, — to defraud a man out of his own property! You are quite right, — certainly a conspiracy.

Yours truly,

R. B.

P. S. — I shall keep a constant eye on the Spencers.
Burn this immediately.

After he had written and sealed this letter, Mr. Beaufort went to bed and slept soundly.

And the next day that place was desolate, and the board on the lawn announced that it was again to be let. But thither daily, in rain or sunshine, came the solitary lover, as a bird that seeks its young in the deserted nest. Again and again he haunted the spot where he had strayed with the lost one, and again and again murmured his passionate vows beneath the fast-fading limes. Are those vows destined to be ratified or annulled? Will the absent forget, or the lingerer be consoled? Had the characters of that young romance been lightly stamped on the fancy where once obliterated they are erased forever, — or were they graven deep in those tablets where

the writing even when invisible exists still, and revives, sweet letter by letter, when the light and the warmth borrowed from the One Bright Presence are applied to the faithful record? There is but one Wizard to disclose that secret, as all others, — the old Gravedigger whose Churchyard is the Earth, whose trade is to find burial-places for Passions that seemed immortal, — disinterring the ashes of some long-crumbling Memory to hollow out the dark bed of some new-perished Hope; He who determines all things, and prophesies none, — for his oracles are uncomprehended till the doom is sealed; He who in the bloom of the fairest affection detects the hectic that consumes it, and while the hymn rings at the altar, marks with his joyless eye the grave for the bridal vow. Wherever is the sepulchre, there is thy temple, O melancholy TIME!

BOOK V.

Und zu eines Stroms Gestaden
Kam ich, der nach Morgen floß.

SCHILLER: *Der Pilgrim.*

CHAPTER I.

PER ambages et ministeria deorum.¹ — PETRONIUS.

MR. ROGER MORTON was behind his counter one drizzling, melancholy day. Mr. Roger Morton, alderman, and twice mayor of his native town, was a thriving man. He had grown portly and corpulent. The nightly potations of brandy and water, continued year after year with mechanical perseverance, had deepened the roses on his cheek. Mr. Roger Morton was never intoxicated,—he “only made himself comfortable.” His constitution was strong; but somehow or other, his digestion was not as good as it might be. He was certain that something or other disagreed with him. He left off the joint one day, the pudding another; now he avoided vegetables as poison, and now he submitted with a sigh to the doctor’s interdict of his cigar. Mr. Roger Morton never thought of leaving off the brandy and water; and he would have resented as the height of impertinent insinuation any hint upon that score to a man of so sober and respectable a character.

Mr. Roger Morton was seated,—for the last four years, ever since his second mayoralty, he had arrogated to himself the dignity of a chair. He received rather than served his

¹ “Through the mysteries and ministrings of the gods.”

customers. The latter task was left to two of his sons. For Tom, after much cogitation, the profession of an apothecary had been selected. Mrs. Morton observed that it was a genteel business, and Tom had always been a likely lad; and Mr. Roger considered that it would be a great comfort and a great saving to have his medical adviser in his own son.

The other two sons and the various attendants of the shop were plying the profitable trade, as customer after customer, with umbrellas and in pattens, dropped into the tempting shelter, when a man, meanly dressed, and who was somewhat past middle age, with a careworn, hungry face, entered timidly. He waited in patience by the crowded counter, elbowed by sharp-boned and eager spinsters—and how sharp the elbows of spinsters are, no man can tell who has not forced his unwelcome way through the agitated groups in a linendraper's shop!—the man, I say, waited patiently and sadly, till the smallest of the shop-boys turned from a lady, who after much sorting and shading had finally decided on two yards of lilac-coloured penny ribbon, and asked, in an insinuating professional tone,—

“What shall I show you, sir?”

“I wish to speak to Mr. Morton. Which is he?”

“Mr. Morton is engaged, sir. I can give you what you want.”

“No; it is a matter of business,—important business.”

The boy eyed the napless and dripping hat, the gloveless hands, and the rusty neckcloth of the speaker, and said, as he passed his fingers through a profusion of light curls,—

“Mr. Morton don't attend much to business himself now; but that's *he*. Any cravats, sir?”

The man made no answer, but moved where, near the window, and chatting with the banker of the town (as the banker tried on a pair of beaver gloves), sat still—after due apology for sitting—Mr. Roger Morton.

The alderman lowered his spectacles as he glanced grimly at the lean apparition that shaded the spruce banker, and said,—

“Do you want me, friend?”

"Yes, sir, if you please;" and the man took off his shabby hat, and bowed low.

"Well, speak out. No begging petition, I hope?"

"No, sir! Your nephews —"

The banker turned round, and in his turn eyed the newcomer. The linendraper started back.

"Nephews!" he repeated, with a bewildered look. "What does the man mean? Wait a bit."

"Oh, I've done!" said the banker, smiling. "I am glad to find we agree so well upon this question: I knew we should. Our member will never suit us if he goes on in this way. Trade must take care of itself. Good day to you!"

"Nephews!" repeated Mr. Morton, rising, and beckoning to the man to follow him into the back parlour, where Mrs. Morton sat casting up the washing-bills.

"Now," said the husband, closing the door, "what do you mean, my good fellow?"

"Sir, what I wish to ask you is if you can tell me what has become of — of the young Beau — that is, of your sister's sons. I understand there were two, and I am told that — that they are both dead. Is it so?"

"What is that to you, friend?"

"An please you, sir, it is a great deal to *them*!"

"Yes, ha, ha! it is a great deal to everybody whether they are alive or dead!" Mr. Morton, since he had been mayor, now and then had his joke. "But really —"

"Roger!" said Mrs. Morton, under her breath, — "Roger!"

"Yes, my dear."

"Come this way, I want to speak to you about this bill." The husband approached, and bent over his wife.

"Who's this man?"

"I don't know."

"Depend on it, he has some claim to make, — some bills or something. Don't commit yourself; the boys are dead for what we know!"

Mr. Morton hemmed and returned to his visitor.

"To tell you the truth, I am not aware of what has become of the young men."

"Then they are not dead,—I thought not!" exclaimed the man, joyously.

"That's more than I can say. It's many years since I lost sight of the only one I ever saw; and they may be both dead for what I know."

"Indeed!" said the man. "Then you can give me no kind of — of — hint like, to find them out?"

"No. Do they owe you anything?"

"It does not signify talking now, sir. I beg your pardon."

"Stay, who are you?"

"I am a very poor man, sir."

Mr. Morton recoiled.

"Poor! Oh, very well, very well. You have done with me now. Good day, good day. I'm busy."

The stranger pecked for a moment at his hat, turned the handle of the door, peered under his gray eyebrows at the portly trader, who, with both hands buried in his pockets, his mouth pursed up, like a man about to say "No," fidgeted uneasily behind Mrs. Morton's chair. He sighed, shook his head, and vanished.

Mrs. Morton rang the bell; the maid-servant entered.

"Wipe the carpet, Jenny — dirty feet! Mr. Morton, it's a Brussels!"

"It was not my fault, my dear. I could not talk about family matters before the whole shop. Do you know, I'd quite forgot those poor boys. This unsettles me. Poor Catherine! she was so fond of them. A pretty boy that Sidney, too. What can have become of them? My heart rebukes me. I wish I had asked the man more."

"More! why, he was just going to beg."

"Beg! yes, very true!" said Mr. Morton, pausing irresolutely; and then, with a hearty tone, he cried out, "And, damme, if he had begged, I could afford him a shilling! I'll go after him." So saying, he hastened back through the shop; but the man was gone, the rain was falling, Mr. Morton had his thin shoes on. He blew his nose, and went back to the counter. But, there, still rose to his memory the pale

face of his dead sister, and a voice murmured in his ear, "Brother, where is my child?"

"Pshaw! it is not my fault if he ran away. Bob, go and get me the county paper."

Mr. Morton had again settled himself, and was deep in a trial for murder, when another stranger strode haughtily into the shop. The new-comer, wrapped in a pelisse of furs, with a thick mustache, and an eye that took in the whole shop, from master to boy, from ceiling to floor, in a glance, had the air at once of a foreigner and a soldier. Every look fastened on him, as he paused an instant, and then walking up to the alderman, said,—

"Sir, you are doubtless Mr. Morton?"

"At your commands, sir," said Roger, rising involuntarily.

"A word with you, then, on business."

"Business!" echoed Mr. Morton, turning rather pale, for he began to think himself haunted; "anything in my line, sir? I should be—"

The stranger bent down his tall stature, and hissed into Mr. Morton's foreboding ear,—

"Your nephews!"

Mr. Morton was literally dumb-stricken. Yes, he certainly *was* haunted! He stared at this second questioner, and fancied that there was something very supernatural and unearthly about him. He was so tall and so dark and so stern and so strange. Was it the Unspeakable himself come for the linen-draper? Nephews again! The uncle of the babes in the wood could hardly have been more startled by the demand!

"Sir," said Mr. Morton at last, recovering his dignity, and somewhat peevishly,— "sir, I don't know why people should meddle with my family affairs. I don't ask other folks about their nephews. I have no nephew that I know of."

"Permit me to speak to you, alone, for one instant."

Mr. Morton sighed, hitched up his trousers, and led the way to the parlour, where Mrs. Morton, having finished the washing-bills, was now engaged in tying certain pieces of bladder round certain pots of preserves. The eldest Miss Morton, a young woman of five or six-and-twenty, who was

about to be very advantageously married to a young gentleman who dealt in coals and played the violin (for N—— was a very musical town), had just joined her for the purpose of extorting "The Swiss Boy, with variations," out of a sleepy little piano, that emitted a very painful cry under the awakening fingers of Miss Margaret Morton.

Mr. Morton threw open the door with a grunt, and the stranger pausing at the threshold, the full flood of sound (key C) upon which "The Swiss Boy" was swimming along, "kine" and all, for life and death, came splash upon him.

"Silence! can't you?" cried the father, putting one hand to his ear, while with the other he pointed to a chair; and as Mrs. Morton looked up from the preserves with that air of indignant suffering with which female meekness upbraids a husband's wanton outrage, Mr. Roger added, shrugging his shoulders,—

"My nephews again, Mrs. M.!"

Miss Margaret turned round, and dropped a courtesy. Mrs. Morton gently let fall a napkin over the preserves, and muttered a sort of salutation, as the stranger, taking off his hat, turned to mother and daughter one of those noble faces in which Nature has written her grant and warranty of the lordship of creation.

"Pardon me," he said, "if I disturb you; but my business will be short. I have come to ask you, sir, frankly, and as one who has a right to ask it, what tidings you can give me of Sidney Morton?"

"Sir, I know nothing whatever about him. He was taken from my house, about twelve years since, by his brother. Myself and the two Mr. Beauforts and another friend of the family went in search of them both. My search failed."

"And theirs?"

"I understand from Mr. Beaufort that they had not been more successful. I have had no communication with those gentlemen since. But that's neither here nor there. In all probability, the elder of the boys—who, I fear, was a sad character—corrupted and ruined his brother; and by this time Heaven knows what and where they are."

"And no one has inquired of you since,—no one has asked the brother of Catherine Morton, nay, rather of Catherine Beaufort, where is the child intrusted to your care?"

This question, so exactly similar to that which his superstition had rung on his own ears, perfectly appalled the worthy alderman. He staggered back, stared at the marked and stern face that lowered upon him, and at last cried,—

"For pity's sake, sir, be just! What could I do for one who left me of his own accord?"

"The day you had beaten him like a dog. You see, Mr. Morton, I know all."

"And what are you?" said Mr. Morton, recovering his English courage, and feeling himself strangely browbeaten in his own house,—“what and who are you, that you thus take the liberty to catechise a man of my character and respectability?"

"Twice mayor —" began Mrs. Morton.

"Hush, Mother!" whispered Miss Margaret; "don't work him up."

"I repeat, sir, what are you?"

"What am I? Your nephew! Who am I? Before men, I bear a name that I have assumed, and not dishonoured; before Heaven I am Philip Beaufort!"

Mrs. Morton dropped down upon her stool; Margaret murmured "My cousin!" in a tone that the ear of the musical coal-merchant might not have greatly relished; and Mr. Morton, after a long pause, came up with a frank and manly expression of joy, and said,—

"Then, sir, I thank Heaven, from my heart, that one of my sister's children stands alive before me!"

"And now, again, I—I whom you accuse of having corrupted and ruined him; *him* for whom I toiled and worked; him, who was to me, then, as a last surviving son to some anxious father—I, from whom he was reft and robbed, I ask you again for Sidney—for my brother!"

"And again I say that I have no information to give you—that— Stay a moment, stay. You must pardon what I have said of you before you made yourself known. I went

but by the accounts I had received from Mr. Beaufort. Let me speak plainly; that gentleman thought, right or wrong, that it would be a great thing to separate your brother from you. He may have found him—it must be so—and kept his name and condition concealed from us all, lest you should detect it. Mrs. M., don't you think so?"

"I'm sure I'm so terrified I don't know what to think," said Mrs. Morton, putting her hand to her forehead, and seeing herself to and fro upon her stool.

"But since they wronged you, since you—you seem so very—very—"

"Very much the gentleman," suggested Miss Margaret.

"Yes, so much the gentleman; well off, too, I should hope, sir,"—and the experienced eye of Mr. Morton glanced at the costly sables that lined the pelisse,—“there can be no difficulty in your learning from Mr. Beaufort all that you wish to know. And pray, sir, may I ask, did you send any one here to-day to make the very inquiry you have made?"

"I? No. What do you mean?"

"Well, well, sit down; there may be something in all this that you may make out better than I can."

And as Philip obeyed, Mr. Morton, who was really and honestly rejoiced to see his sister's son alive and apparently thriving, proceeded to relate pretty exactly the conversation he had held with the previous visitor. Philip listened earnestly and with attention. Who could this questioner be? Some one who knew his birth, some one who sought him out, some one, who—Good heavens! could it be the long-lost witness of the marriage?

As soon as that idea struck him, he started from his seat, and entreated Morton to accompany him in search of the stranger. "You know not," he said, in a tone impressed with that energy of will in which lay the talent of his mind,—"you know not of what importance this may be to my prospects, to your sister's fair name. If it should be the witness returned at last! Who else, of the rank you describe, would be interested in such inquiries? Come!"

"What witness?" said Mrs. Morton, fretfully. "You don't mean to come over us with the old story of the marriage?"

"Shall your wife slander your own sister, sir? A marriage there was. God yet will proclaim the right, and the name of Beaufort shall be yet placed on my mother's gravestone. Come!"

"Here are your shoes and umbrella, Pa," cried Miss Margaret, inspired by Philip's earnestness.

"My fair cousin, I guess;" and as the soldier took her hand, he kissed the unreluctant cheek, turned to the door; Mr. Morton placed his arm in his, and the next moment they were in the street.

When Catherine in her meek tones had said, "Philip Beaufort was my husband," Roger Morton had disbelieved her; and now one word from the son, who could, in comparison, know so little of the matter, had almost sufficed to convert and to convince the sceptic. Why was this? Because—Man believes the Strong!

CHAPTER II.

QUID Virtus et quid Sapientia possit

Utile proposuit nobis exemplar *Ulysses*.¹ — HORACE.

MEANWHILE the object of their search, on quitting Mr. Morton's shop, had walked slowly and sadly on, through the plashing streets, till he came to a public-house in the outskirts and on the high road to London. Here he took shelter for a short time, drying himself by the kitchen fire, with the license purchased by fourpennyworth of gin; and having learned that the next coach to London would not pass for some hours, he finally settled himself in the ingle, till the guard's horn should arouse him. By the same coach that the night before

¹ "He has proposed to us Ulysses as a useful example of how much may be accomplished by Virtue and Wisdom."

had conveyed Philip to N——, had the very man he sought been also a passenger!

The poor fellow was sickly and wearied out. He had settled into a doze, when he was suddenly awakened by the wheels of a coach and the trampling of horses. Not knowing how long he had slept, and imagining that the vehicle he had awaited was at the door, he ran out. It was a coach coming *from* London, and the driver was joking with a pretty barmaid who, in rather short petticoats, was holding up to him the customary glass. The man, after satisfying himself that his time was not yet come, was turning back to the fire, when a head popped itself out of the window, and a voice cried, "Stars and garters! Will—so that's you!" At the sound of the voice the man halted abruptly, turned very pale, and his limbs trembled. The inside passenger opened the door, jumped out with a little carpet-bag in his hand, took forth a long leathern purse from which he ostentatiously selected the coins that paid his fare and satisfied the coachman, and then, passing his arm through that of the acquaintance he had discovered, led him back into the house.

"Will, Will," he whispered, "you have been to the Mortons. Never moind, let's hear all. Jenny or Dolly, or whatever your sweet praetty name is, a private room and a pint of brandy, my dear. Hot water and lots of the grocery. That's right."

And as soon as the pair found themselves, with the brandy before them, in a small parlour with a good fire, the last comer went to the door, shut it cautiously, flung his bag under the table, took off his gloves, spread himself wider and wider before the fire, until he had entirely excluded every ray from his friend, and then suddenly turning so that the back might enjoy what the front had gained, he exclaimed, —

"Damme, Will, you're a praetty sort of a broather to give me the slip in that way. But in this world every man for his-self!"

"I tell you," said William, with something like decision in his voice, "that I will not do any wrong to these young men if they live."

"Who asks you to do a wrong to them, booby? Perhaps I may be the best friend they may have yet, — ay, or you too, though you're the ungratefulest whimsicallest sort of a son of a gun that ever I came across. Come, help yourself, and don't roll up your eyes in that way, like a Muggletonian asoide of a Fye-Fye!"

Here the speaker paused a moment, and with a graver and more natural tone of voice proceeded.

"So you did not believe me when I told you that these brothers were dead, and you have been to the Mortons to learn more?"

"Yes."

"Well, and what have you learned?"

"Nothing. Morton declares that he does not know that they are alive, but he says also that he does not know that they are dead."

"Indeed," said the other, listening with great attention; "and you really think that he does *not* know anything about them?"

"I do, indeed."

"Hum! Is he a sort of man who would post down the rhino to help the search?"

"He looked as if he had the yellow fever when I said I was poor," returned William, turning round, and trying to catch a glimpse at the fire, as he gulped his brandy and water.

"Then I'll be d—d if I run the risk of calling. I have done some things in this town by way of business before now; and though it's a long time ago, yet folks don't forget a haundsome man in a hurry — especially if he has done 'em! Now, then, listen to me. You see, I have given this matter all the 'tention in my power. 'If the lads be dead,' said I to you, 'it is no use burning one's fingers by holding a candle to bones in a coffin. But Mr. Beaufort need not know they are dead, and we'll see what we can get out of him; and if I succeeds, as I think I shall, you and I may hold up our heads for the rest of our life.' Accordingly, as I told you, I went to Mr. Beaufort, and — 'Gad! I thought we had it all our own way. But since I saw you last, there's been the devil and

all. When I called again, Will, I was shown in to an old lord, sharp as a gimblet. Hang me, William, if he did not frighten me out of my seven senses!"

Here Captain Smith (the reader has, no doubt, already discovered that the speaker was no less a personage) took three or four nervous strides across the room, returned to the table, threw himself in a chair, placed one foot on one hob and one on the other, laid his finger on his nose, and with a significant wink said in a whisper, "Will, he knew I had been lagged! He not only refused to hear all I had to say, but threatened to prosecute, persecute, hang, draw, and quarter us both, if we ever dared to come out with the truth."

"But what's the good of the truth if the boys are dead?" said William, timidly.

The Captain, without heeding this question, continued, as he stirred the sugar in his glass, "Well, out I sneaked, and as soon as I had got to my own door I turned round and saw Sharp the runner on the other side of the way. I felt deuced queer. However, I went in, sat down, and began to think. I saw that it was up with us, so far as the old uns were concerned; and now it might be worth while to find out if the young uns really were dead."

"Then you did not know *that* after all! I thought so. Oh, Jerry!"

"Why, look you, man, it was not our interest to take their side if we could make our bargain out of the other. 'Cause why? You are only one witness; you are a good fellow, but poor, and with very shaky nerves, Will. You does not know what them big wigs are when a man's caged in a witness-box; they flank one up and they flank one down, and they bully and bother, till one's like a horse at Astley's dancing on hot iron. If your testimony broke down, why it would be all up with the case, and what then would become of us? Besides," added the Captain, with dignified candour, "I *have* been lagged, — it's no use denying it; I am back before my time. Inquiries about your respectability would soon bring the bulkies about me; and you would not have poor Jerry sent back to that d—d low place on t' other side of the herring-pond, would you?"

"Ah, Jerry!" said William, kindly placing his hand in his brother's, "you know I helped you to escape; I left all to come over with you."

"So you did, and you're a good fellow; though as to leaving *all*, why you had got rid of *all* first. And when you told me about the marriage, did not I say that I saw our way to a snug thing for life? But to return to my story. There is a danger in going with the youngsters. But since, Will, — since nothing but hard words is to be got on the other side, we'll do our duty, and I'll find them out, and do the best I can for us, — that is, if they be yet above ground. And now I'll own to you that I think I know that the younger one is alive."

"You do?"

Yes! But as he won't come in for anything unless his brother is dead, we must have a hunt for the heir. Now I told you that, many years ago, there was a lad with me, who, putting all things together — seeing how the Beauforts came after him, and recollecting different things he let out at the time — I feel pretty sure is your old master's Hopeful. I know that poor Will Gawtreys gave this lad the address of old Gregg, a friend of mine. So after watching Sharp off the sly, I went that very night, or rather at two in the morning, to Gregg's house, and after brushing up his memory, I found that the lad had been to him, and gone over afterwards to Paris in search of Gawtreys, who was then keeping a matrimony shop. As I was not rich enough to go off to Paris in a pleasant, gentlemanlike way, I allowed Gregg to put me up to a noice quiet little bit of business. Don't shake your head; all safe, — a rural affair! That took some days. You see it has helped to new rig me," and the Captain glanced complacently over a very smart suit of clothes. "Well, on my return I went to call on you, but you were flown. I half suspected you might have gone to the mother's relations here; and I thought at all events that I could not do better than go myself and see what they knew of the matter. From what you say I feel I had better now let that alone, and go over to Paris at once; leave me alone to find out. And faith, what with

Sharp and the old lord, the sooner I quit England the better."

"And you really think you shall get hold of them after all? Oh, never fear my nerves if I'm once in the right; it's living with you and seeing you do wrong and hearing you talk wickedly that makes me tremble."

"Bother!" said the Captain, "you need not crow over me. Stand up, Will; there now, look at us two in the glass! Why, I look ten years younger than you do, in spite of all my troubles. I dress like a gentleman, as I am; I have money in my pocket; I put money in yours; without me you'd starve. Look you, you carried over a little fortune to Australia, you married, you farmed, you lived honestly, and yet that d—d shilly-shally disposition of yours, 'ticed into one speculation to-day, and scared out of another to-morrow, ruined you!"

"Jerry, Jerry!" cried William, writhing; "don't, don't!"

"But it's all true, and I wants to cure you of preaching. And then, when you were nearly run out, instead of putting a bold face on it and setting your shoulder to the wheel, you gives it up, you sells what you have, you bolts over, wife and all, to Boston, because some one tells you you can do better in America; you are out of the way when a search is made for you; years ago when you could have benefited yourself and your master's family without any danger to you or me, nobody can find you; 'cause why, you could not bear that your old friends in England, or in the colony either, should know that you were turned a slave-driver in Kentucky. You kick up a mutiny among the niggers by moaning over them, instead of keeping 'em to it; you get kicked out yourself; your wife begs you to go back to Australia, where her relations will do something for you; you work your passage out, looking as ragged as a colt from grass; wife's uncle don't like ragged nephews-in-law, wife dies broken-hearted, and you might be breaking stones on the roads with the convicts, if I, myself a convict, had not taken compassion on you. Don't cry, Will, it is all for your own good, — I hates cant! Whereas I, my own master from eighteen, never stooped to serve any other, have dressed like a gentleman, kissed the pretty girls, drove my

pheaton, been in all the papers as 'the celebrated Dashing Jerry,' never wanted a guinea in my pocket, and even when lagged at last had a pretty little sum in the colonial bank to lighten my misfortunes. I escape, I bring you over; and here I am, supporting you, and in all probability the one on whom depends the fate of one of the first families in the country. And you preaches at me, do you? Look you, Will; in this world, honesty's nothing without force of character! And so your health!"

Here the Captain emptied the rest of the brandy into his glass, drained it at a draught, and while poor William was wiping his eyes with a ragged blue pocket-handkerchief, rang the bell, and asked what coaches would pass that way to —, a seaport town at some distance. On hearing that there was one at six o'clock, the Captain ordered the best dinner the larder would afford to be got ready as soon as possible; and when they were again alone, thus accosted his brother, —

"Now you go back to town, — here are four shiners for you. Keep quiet, don't speak to a soul; don't put *your* foot in it, that's all I beg, and I'll find out whatever there is to be found. It is damnably out of my way embarking at —, but I had best keep clear of Lunnon. And I tell you what, if these youngsters have hopped the twig, there's another bird on the bough that may prove a goldfinch after all, — young Arthur Beaufort. I hear he is a wild, expensive chap, and one who can't live without lots of money. Now, it's easy to frighten a man of that sort, and I sha' n't have the old lord at *his* elbow."

"But I tell you that I only care for my poor master's children."

"Yes; but if they are dead, and by saying they are alive, one can make old age comfortable, there's no harm in it, eh?"

"I don't know," said William, irresolutely; "but certainly it is a hard thing to be so poor at my time of life; and so honest a man as I've been, too!"

Captain Smith went a little too far when he said that "Honesty's nothing without force of character." Still Honesty has no business to be helpless and draggetailed; she must be

active and brisk, and make use of her wits; or, though she keep clear of the prison, 't is no very great wonder if she fall on the parish.

CHAPTER III.

Mitis. This Macilente, signior, begins to be more sociable on a sudden.

Every Man out of his Humour.

Punt. Signior, you are sufficiently instructed.

Fast. Who, I, sir? — *Ibid.*

AFTER spending the greater part of the day in vain inquiries and a vain search, Philip and Mr. Morton returned to the house of the latter.

“And now,” said Philip, “all that remains to be done is this: first, give to the police of the town a detailed description of the man; and secondly, let us put an advertisement both in the county journal and in some of the London papers to the effect that if the person who called on you will take the trouble to apply again, either personally or by letter, he may obtain the information sought for. In case he does, I will trouble you to direct him to — yes — to M. de Vaudemont, according to this address.”

“Not to you, then?”

“It is the same thing,” replied Philip, dryly. “You have confirmed my suspicions that the Beauforts know something of my brother. What did you say of some other friend of the family who assisted in the search?”

“Oh, a Mr. Spencer! an old acquaintance of your mother’s.” Here Mr. Morton smiled, but not being encouraged in a joke, went on, “However, that’s neither here nor there; *he* certainly never found out your brother, for I have had several letters from him at different times, asking if any news had been heard of either of you.”

And, indeed, Spencer had taken peculiar pains to deceive

the Mortons, whose interposition he feared little less than that of the Beauforts.

"Then it can be of no use to apply to him," said Philip, carelessly, not having any recollection of the name of Spencer, and therefore attaching little importance to the mention of him.

"Certainly, I should think not. Depend on it, Mr. Beaufort must know."

"True," said Philip; "and I have only to thank you for your kindness and return to town."

"But stay with us this day, — do; let me feel that we are friends. I assure you poor Sidney's fate has been a load on my mind ever since he left. You shall have the bed he slept in, and over which your mother bent when she left him and me for the last time."

These words were said with so much feeling that the adventurer wrung his uncle's hand, and said, "Forgive me, I wronged you; I will be your guest."

Mrs. Morton, strange to say, evinced no symptoms of ill-humour at the news of the proffered hospitality. In fact, Miss Margaret had been so eloquent in Philip's praise during his absence that she suffered herself to be favourably impressed. Her daughter, indeed, had obtained a sort of ascendancy over Mrs. M. and the whole house ever since she had received so excellent an offer. And, moreover, some people are like dogs, — they snarl at the ragged and fawn on the well-dressed. Mrs. Morton did not object to a nephew *de facto*; she only objected to a nephew *in forma pauperis*. The evening, therefore, passed more cheerfully than might have been anticipated, though Philip found some difficulty in parrying the many questions put to him on the past. He contented himself with saying, as briefly as possible, that he had served in a foreign service and acquired what sufficed him for an independence; and then, with the ease which a man picks up in the great world, turned the conversation to the prospects of the family whose guest he was. Having listened with due attention to Mrs. Morton's eulogies on Tom, who had been sent for, and who drank the praises on his own gentility into

a very large pair of blushing ears; also, to her self-felicitations on Miss Margaret's marriage; *item*, on the service rendered to the town by Mr. Roger, who had repaired the town-hall in his first mayoralty at his own expense; *item*, to a long chronicle of her own genealogy, how she had one cousin a clergyman, and how her great-grandfather had been knighted; *item*, to the domestic virtues of all her children; *item*, to a confused explanation of the chastisement inflicted on Sidney, which Philip cut short in the middle, — he asked, with a smile, what had become of the Plaskwiths. "Oh," said Mrs. Morton, "my brother Kit has retired from business. His son-in-law, Mr. Plimmings, has succeeded."

"Oh, then Plimmings married one of the young ladies?"

"Yes, Jane, — she had a sad squint! Tom, there is nothing to laugh at, — we are all as God made us, — 'Handsome is as handsome does.' She has had three little uns!"

"Do they squint too?" asked Philip; and Miss Margaret giggled and Tom roared and the other young men roared too. Philip had certainly said something very witty.

This time Mrs. Morton administered no reproof; but replied pensively, —

"Natur is very mysterious, — they *all* squint!"

Mr. Morton conducted Philip to his chamber. There it was, fresh, clean, unaltered, — the same white curtains, the same honeysuckle paper as when Catherine had crept across the threshold.

"Did Sidney ever tell you that his mother placed a ring round his neck that night?" asked Mr. Morton.

"Yes; and the dear boy wept when he said that he had slept too soundly to know that she was by his side that last, last time. The ring — oh, how well I remember it! — she never put it off till then; and often in the fields, — for we were wild wanderers together in that day, — often when his head lay on my shoulder, I felt that ring still resting on his heart, and fancied it was a talisman, a blessing. Well, well, good night to you!" And he shut the door on his uncle, and was alone.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Man of Law,

And a great suit is like to be between them.

BEN JONSON: *Staple of News.*

ON arriving in London, Philip went first to the lodging he still kept there, and to which his letters were directed; and among some communications from Paris, full of the politics and the hopes of the Carlists, he found the following note from Lord Lilburne:—

DEAR SIR, — When I met you the other day, I told you I had been threatened with the gout. The enemy has now taken possession of the field, — I am sentenced to regimen and the sofa. But as it is my rule in life to make afflictions as light as possible, so I have asked a few friends to take compassion on me, and help me ‘to shuffle off this mortal coil,’ by dealing me, if they can, four by honours. Any time between nine and twelve to-night or to-morrow night, you will find me at home; and if you are not better engaged, suppose you dine with me to-day — or rather dine opposite to me — and excuse my Spartan broth. You will meet (besides any two or three friends whom an impromptu invitation may find disengaged) my sister, with Beaufort and their daughter. They only arrived in town this morning, and are kind enough “to nurse me,” as they call it, — that is to say, their cook is taken ill!

Yours,

LILBURNE.

PARK LANE, Sept. —.

“The Beauforts. Fate favours me, — I will go. The date is for to-day.”

He sent off a hasty line to accept the invitation, and finding he had a few hours yet to spare, he resolved to employ them in consultation with some lawyer as to the chances of ultimately regaining his inheritance, — a hope which, however wild, he had, since his return to his native shore, and especially since he had heard of the strange visit made to Roger

Morton, permitted himself to indulge. With this idea he sallied out, meaning to consult Liancourt, who, having a large acquaintance among the English, seemed the best person to advise him as to the choice of a lawyer at once active and honest, — when he suddenly chanced upon that gentleman himself.

"This is lucky, my dear Liancourt. I was just going to your lodgings."

"And I was coming to yours to know if you dine with Lord Lilburne. He told me he had asked you. I have just left him. And by the sofa of Mephistopheles, there was the prettiest Margaret you ever beheld."

"Indeed! Who?"

"He called her his niece; but I should doubt if he had any relation on this side the Styx so human as a niece."

"You seem to have no great predilection for our host."

"My dear Vaudemont, between our blunt, soldierly natures and those wily, icy, sneering intellects there is the antipathy of the dog to the cat."

"Perhaps so on our side, not on his — or why does he invite us?"

"London is empty; there is no one else to ask. We are new faces, new minds to him. We amuse him more than the hackneyed comrades he has worn out. Besides he plays — and you too. Fie on you!"

"Liancourt, I had two objects in knowing that man, and I pay to the toll for the bridge. When I cease to want the passage, I shall cease to pay the toll."

"But the bridge may be a drawbridge, and the moat is devilish deep below. Without metaphor, that man may ruin you before you know where you are."

"Bah! I have my eyes open. I know how much to spend on the rogue whose service I hire as a lackey's; and I know also where to stop. Liancourt," he added, after a short pause, and in a tone deep with suppressed passion, "when I first saw that man, I thought of appealing to his heart for one who has a claim on it. That was a vain hope. And then there came upon me a sterner and deadlier thought, — the scheme of the

Avenger! This Lilburne — this rogue whom the world sets up to worship — ruined, body and soul ruined, one whose name the world gibbets with scorn! Well, I thought to avenge that man. In his own house, amidst you all, I thought to detect the sharper, and brand the cheat!"

"You startle me! It has been whispered, indeed, that Lord Lilburne is dangerous, — but skill is dangerous. To cheat! an English gentleman! a nobleman! impossible!"

"Whether he do or not," returned Vaudemont, in a calmer tone, "I have foregone the vengeance, because he is —"

"Is what?"

"No matter," said Vaudemont aloud, but he added to himself, "Because he is the grandfather of Fanny!"

"You are very enigmatical to-day."

"Patience, Liancourt; I may solve all the riddles that make up my life, yet. Bear with me a little longer. And now can you help me to a lawyer, — a man experienced, indeed, and of repute, but young, active, not overlaid with business. I want his zeal and his time for a hazard that your monopolists of clients may not deem worth their devotion."

"I can recommend you, then, the very man you require. I had a suit some years ago at Paris, for which English witnesses were necessary. My *avocat* employed a solicitor here whose activity in collecting my evidence gained my cause. I will answer for his diligence and his honesty."

"His address?"

"Mr. Barlow, somewhere by the Strand, — let me see — Essex — yes, Essex Street."

"Then good-by to you for the present. You dine at Lord Lilburne's too?"

"Yes. Adieu till then."

Vaudemont was not long before he arrived at Mr. Barlow's. A brass-plate announced to him the house. He was shown at once into a parlour, where he saw a man whom lawyers would call young and spinsters middle-aged, — namely, about two-and-forty, — with a bold, resolute, intelligent countenance, and that steady, calm, sagacious eye, which inspires at once confidence and esteem.

Vaudemont scanned him with the look of one who has been accustomed to judge mankind—as a scholar does books—with rapidity because with practice. He had at first resolved to submit to him the heads of his case without mentioning names, and, in fact, he so commenced his narrative; but by degrees, as he perceived how much his own earnestness arrested and engrossed the interest of his listener, he warmed into fuller confidence, and ended by a full disclosure, and a caution as to the profoundest secrecy in case, if there were no hope to recover his rightful name, he might yet wish to retain, unannoyed by curiosity or suspicion, that by which he was not discredibly known.

“Sir,” said Mr. Barlow, after assuring him of the most scrupulous discretion, — “sir, I have some recollection of the trial instituted by your mother, Mrs. *Beaufort*” — and the slight emphasis he laid on that name was the most grateful compliment he could have paid to the truth of Philip’s recital. “My impression is that it was managed in a very slovenly manner by her lawyer; and some of his oversights we may repair in a suit instituted by yourself. But it would be absurd to conceal from you the great difficulties that beset us. Your mother’s suit, designed to establish her own rights, was far easier than that which you must commence, — namely, an action for ejectment against a man who has been some years in undisturbed possession. Of course, until the missing witness is found out, it would be madness to commence litigation. And the question, then, will be, how far that witness will suffice? It is true that one witness of a marriage, if the others are dead, is held sufficient by law; but I need not add, that that witness must be thoroughly credible. In suits for real property, very little documentary or secondary evidence is admitted. I doubt even whether the certificate of the marriage on which — in the loss or destruction of the register — you lay so much stress, would be available in itself. But if an *examined copy*, it becomes of the last importance, for it will then inform us of the name of the person who extracted and examined it. Heaven grant it may not have been the clergyman himself who performed the ceremony, and who,

you say, is dead; if some one else, we should then have a second, no doubt credible and most valuable witness. The document would thus become available as proof, and, I think, that we should not fail to establish our case."

"But this certificate, — how is it ever to be found? I told you we had searched everywhere in vain."

"True; but you say that your mother always declared that the late Mr. Beaufort had so solemnly assured her, even just prior to his decease, that it was in existence, that I have no doubt as to the fact. It may be possible, but it is a terrible insinuation to make, that if Mr. Robert Beaufort, in examining the papers of the deceased, chanced upon a document so important to him, he abstracted or destroyed it. If this should not have been the case (and Mr. Robert Beaufort's moral character is unspotted, and we have no right to suppose it), the probability is, either that it was intrusted to some third person, or placed in some hidden drawer or deposit, the secret of which your father never disclosed. Who has purchased the house you lived in?"

"Fernside? Lord Lilburne. Mrs. Robert Beaufort's brother."

"Humph! Probably, then, he took the furniture and all. Sir, this is a matter that requires some time for close consideration. With your leave, I will not only insert in the London papers an advertisement to the effect that you suggested to Mr. Roger Morton (in case you should have made a right conjecture as to the object of the man who applied to him), but I will also advertise for the witness himself. William Smith, you say, his name is. Did the lawyer employed by Mrs. Beaufort send to inquire for him in the colony?"

"No; I fear there could not have been time for that. My mother was so anxious and eager, and so convinced of the justice of her case —"

"That's a pity; her lawyer must have been a sad driveller."

"Besides, now I remember, inquiry was made of his relations in England. His father, a farmer, was then alive; the answer was that he had certainly left Australia. His last letter, written two years before that date, containing a request

for money, which the father, himself made a bankrupt by reverses, could not give, had stated that he was about to seek his fortune elsewhere. Since then they had heard nothing of him."

"Ahem! Well, you will perhaps let me know where any relations of his are yet to be found, and I will look up the former suit, and go into the whole case without delay. In the mean time, you do right, sir, — if you will allow me to say it, — not to disclose either your own identity or a hint of your intentions. It is no use putting suspicion on its guard. And my search for this certificate must be managed with the greatest address. But, by the way — speaking of *identity* — there can be no difficulty, I hope, in proving yours."

Philip was startled. "Why, I am greatly altered."

"But probably your beard and mustache may contribute to that change; and doubtless in the village where you lived there would be many with whom you were in sufficient intercourse, and on whose recollection, by recalling little anecdotes and circumstances with which no one but yourself could be acquainted, your features would force themselves along with the moral conviction that the man who spoke to them could be no other but Philip Morton — or rather Beaufort."

"You are right; there must be many such. There was not a cottage in the place where I and my dogs were not familiar and half domesticated."

"All's right, so far, then. But I repeat, we must not be too sanguine. Law is not justice —"

"But *God* is," said Philip; and he left the room.

CHAPTER V.

Volpone. A little in a mist, but not dejected ;
Never — but still myself.

BEN JONSON: *Volpone.*

Peregrine. Am I enough disguised ?

Mer. Ay, I warrant you.

Per. Save you, fair lady. — *Ibid.*

It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. The ill wind that had blown gout to Lord Lilburne, had blown Lord Lilburne away from the injury he had meditated against what he called "the object of his attachment." How completely and entirely, indeed, the state of Lord Lilburne's feelings depended on the state of his health, may be seen in the answer he gave to his valet, when, the morning after the first attack of the gout, that worthy person, by way of cheering his master, proposed to ascertain something as to the movements of one with whom Lord Lilburne professed to be so violently in love. "Confound you, Dykeman!" exclaimed the invalid, "why do you trouble me about women when I'm in this condition? I don't care if they were all at the bottom of the sea! Reach me the colchicum! I must keep my mind calm."

Whenever tolerably well, Lord Lilburne was careless of his health; the moment he was ill, Lord Lilburne paid himself the greatest possible attention. Though a man of firm nerves, in youth of remarkable daring, and still, though no longer rash, of sufficient personal courage, he was by no means fond of the thought of death,—that is, of his *own* death. Not that he was tormented by any religious apprehensions of the Dread Unknown, but simply because the only life of which he had any experience seemed to him a peculiarly pleasant thing. He had a sort of instinctive persuasion that John Lord Lilburne would not be better off anywhere else. Always disliking solitude, he disliked it more than

ever when he was ill, and he therefore welcomed the visit of his sister and the gentle hand of his pretty niece. As for Beaufort, he bored the sufferer; and when that gentleman on his arrival, shutting out his wife and daughter, whispered to Lilburne, "Any more news of that impostor?" Lilburne answered peevishly, "I never talk about business when I have the gout! I have set Sharp to keep a look-out for him, but he has learned nothing as yet. And now go to your club. You are a worthy creature, but too solemn for my spirits just at this moment. I have a few people coming to dine with me, your wife will do the honours, and—you can come in the evening."

Though Mr. Robert Beaufort's sense of importance swelled and chafed at this very unceremonious *congé*, he forced a smile, and said,—

"Well, it is no wonder you are a little fretful with the gout. I have plenty to do in town, and Mrs. Beaufort and Camilla can come back without waiting for me."

"Why, as your cook is ill and they can't dine at a club, you may as well leave them here till I am a little better; not that I care, for I can hire a better nurse than either of them."

"My dear Lilburne, don't talk of hiring nurses; certainly, I am too happy if they can be of comfort to you."

"No! on second thoughts, you may take back your wife,—she's always talking of her own complaints,—and leave me Camilla; you can't want *her* for a few days."

"Just as you like. And you really think I have managed as well as I could about this young man, eh?"

"Yes, yes! And so you go to Beaufort Court in a few days?"

"I propose doing so. I wish you were well enough to come."

"Um! Chambers says that it would be a very good air for me,—better than Fernside; and as to my castle in the north, I would as soon go to Siberia. Well, if I get better, I will pay you a visit, only you always have such a stupid set of respectable people about you. I shock them, and they oppress me."

"Why, as I hope soon to see Arthur, I shall make it as agreeable to him as I can, and I shall be very much obliged to you if you would invite a few of your own friends."

"Well, you are a good fellow, Beaufort, and I will take you at your word; and since one good turn deserves another, I have now no scruple in telling you that I feel quite sure that you will have no further annoyance from this troublesome witness-monger."

"In that case," said Beaufort, "I may pick up a better match for Camilla! Good-by, my dear Lilburne."

"Form and Ceremony of the world!" snarled the peer, as the door closed on his brother-in-law, "ye make little men very moral, and not a bit the better for being so!"

It so happened that Vaudemont arrived before any of the other guests that day, and during the half hour which Dr. Chambers assigned to his illustrious patient, so that when he entered there were only Mrs. Beaufort and Camilla in the drawing-room.

Vaudemont drew back involuntarily as he recognized in the faded countenance of the elder lady features associated with one of the dark passages in his earlier life; but Mrs. Beaufort's gracious smile, and urbane, though languid, welcome, sufficed to assure him that the recognition was not mutual. He advanced, and again stopped short, as his eye fell upon that fair and still childlike form, which had once knelt by his side and pleaded with the orphan for his brother. While he spoke to her, many recollections, some dark and stern—but those, at least, connected with Camilla soft and gentle—thrilled through his heart. Occupied as her own thoughts and feelings necessarily were with Sidney, there was something in Vaudemont's appearance, his manner, his voice, which forced upon Camilla a strange and undefined interest; and even Mrs. Beaufort was roused from her customary apathy, as she glanced at that dark and commanding face with something between admiration and fear. Vaudemont had scarcely, however, spoken ten words, when some other guests were announced; and Lord Lilburne was wheeled in upon his sofa shortly afterwards. Vaudemont continued, however,

seated next to Camilla, and the embarrassment he had at first felt disappeared. He possessed, when he pleased, that kind of eloquence which belongs to men who have seen much and felt deeply, and whose talk has not been frittered down to the commonplace jargon of the world. His very phraseology was distinct and peculiar, and he had that rarest of all charms in polished life,—originality both of thought and of manner. Camilla blushed when she found at dinner that he placed himself by her side. That evening De Vaudemont excused himself from playing, but the table was easily made without him, and still he continued to converse with the daughter of the man whom he held as his worst foe. By degrees, he turned the conversation into a channel that might lead him to the knowledge he sought.

"It was my fate," said he, "once to become acquainted with an intimate friend of the late Mr. Beaufort. Will you pardon me if I venture to fulfil a promise I made to him, and ask you to inform me what has become of a — a — that is, of Sidney Morton?"

"Sidney Morton! I don't even remember the name. Oh, yes! I have heard it," added Camilla, innocently, and with a candour that showed how little she knew of the secrets of the family; "he was one of two poor boys in whom my brother felt a deep interest,—some relations to my uncle. Yes, yes! I remember now. I never knew Sidney, but I once did see his brother."

"Indeed! and you remember —"

"Yes! I was very young then. I scarcely recollect what passed, it was all so confused and strange; but I know that I made Papa very angry, and I was told never to mention the name of Morton again. I believe they behaved very ill to Papa."

"And you never learned — never! — the fate of either — of Sidney?"

"Never!"

"But your father must know?"

"I think not; but tell me," said Camilla, with girlish and unaffected innocence, "I have always felt anxious to know,— what and who were those poor boys?"

What and who were they? So deep, then, was the stain upon their name, that the modest mother and the decorous father had never even said to that young girl, "They are your cousins,—the children of the man in whose gold we revel!"

Philip bit his lip, and the spell of Camilla's presence seemed vanished. He muttered some inaudible answer, turned away to the card-table, and Liancourt took the chair he had left vacant.

"And how does Miss Beaufort like my friend Vaudemont? I assure you that I have seldom seen him so alive to the fascination of female beauty!"

"Oh," said Camilla, with her silver laugh, "your nation spoils us for our own countrymen. You forget how little we are accustomed to flattery."

"Flattery! what truth could flatter on the lips of an exile? But you don't answer my question,—what think you of Vaudemont? Few are more admired. He is handsome!"

"Is he?" said Camilla, and she glanced at Vaudemont, as he stood at a little distance, thoughtful and abstracted. Every girl forms to herself some untold dream of that which she considers fairest; and Vaudemont had not the delicate and faultless beauty of Sidney. There was nothing that corresponded to her ideal in his marked features and lordly shape! But she owned reluctantly to herself that she had seldom seen among the trim gallants of everyday life a form so striking and impressive. The air, indeed, was professional,—the most careless glance could detect the soldier. But it seemed the soldier of an elder age or a wilder clime. He recalled to her those heads which she had seen in the Beaufort Gallery and other Collections yet more celebrated,—portraits by Titian of those warrior statesmen who lived in the old Republics of Italy in a perpetual struggle with their kind, images of dark, resolute, earnest men. Even whatever was intellectual in his countenance spoke, as in those portraits, of a mind sharpened rather in active than in studious life,—intellectual, not from the pale hues, the worn exhaustion, and the sunken cheek of the bookman and dreamer, but

from its collected and stern repose, the calm depth that lay beneath the fire of the eyes, and the strong will that spoke in the close, full lips, and the high but not cloudless forehead.

And, as she gazed, Vaudemont turned round; her eyes fell beneath his, and she felt angry with herself that she blushed. Vaudemont saw the downcast eye, he saw the blush, and the attraction of Camilla's presence was restored. He would have approached her, but at that moment Mr. Beaufort himself entered, and his thoughts went again into a darker channel.

"Yes," said Liancourt, "you must allow Vaudemont looks what he is,—a noble fellow and a gallant soldier. Did you never hear of his battle with the tigress? It made a noise in India. I must tell it you as I have heard it."

And while Liancourt was narrating the adventure, whatever it was, to which he referred, the card-table was broken up, and Lord Lilburne, still reclining on his sofa, lazily introduced his brother-in-law to such of the guests as were strangers to him, Vaudemont among the rest. Mr. Beaufort had never seen Philip Morton more than three times; once at Fernside, and the other times by an imperfect light, and when his features were convulsed by passion, and his form disfigured by his dress. Certainly, therefore, had Robert Beaufort even possessed that faculty of memory which is supposed to belong peculiarly to kings and princes, and which recalls every face once seen, it might have tasked the gift to the utmost to have detected, in the bronzed and decorated foreigner to whom he was now presented, the features of the wild and long-lost boy. But still some dim and uneasy presentiment, or some struggling and painful effort of recollection, was in his mind, as he spoke to Vaudemont, and listened to the cold calm tone of his reply.

"Who do you say that Frenchman is?" he whispered to his brother-in-law, as Vaudemont turned away.

"Oh, a cleverish sort of adventurer,—a gentleman; he plays. He has seen a good deal of the world; he rather amuses me,—different from other people. I think of asking him to join our circle at Beaufort Court."

Mr. Beaufort coughed huskily; but not seeing any reasonable objection to the proposal, and afraid of rousing the sleeping hyena of Lord Lilburne's sarcasm, he merely said,—

"Any one you like to invite;" and looking round for some one on whom to vent his displeasure, perceived Camilla still listening to Liancourt. He stalked up to her, and as Liancourt, seeing her rise, rose also and moved away, he said peevishly, "You will never learn to conduct yourself properly; you are to be left here to nurse and comfort your uncle, and not to listen to the gibberish of every French adventurer. Well, Heaven be praised, I have a son!—girls are a great plague!"

"So they are, Mr. Beaufort," sighed his wife, who had just joined him, and who was jealous of the preference Lilburne had given to her daughter.

"And so selfish!" added Mrs. Beaufort. "They only care for their own amusements, and never mind how uncomfortable their parents are for want of them."

"Oh, dear Mamma, don't say so; let me go home with you, — I'll speak to my uncle!"

"Nonsense, child! Come along, Mr. Beaufort;" and the affectionate parents went out arm in arm. They did not perceive that Vaudemont had been standing close behind them; but Camilla, now looking up with tears in her eyes, again caught his gaze. He had heard all.

"And they ill-treat her," he muttered,—"*that divides her from them!* She will be left here; I shall see her again."

As he turned to depart, Lilburne beckoned to him.

"You do not mean to desert our table?"

"No; but I am not very well to-night,—to-morrow, if you will allow me."

"Ay, to-morrow; and if you can spare an hour in the morning it will be a charity. You see," he added in a whisper, "I have a nurse, though I have no children. D'ye think that's love? Bah! sir, a legacy! Good night."

"No! no! no!" said Vaudemont to himself, as he walked through the moonlit streets. "No! though my heart burns, — poor murdered felon! — to avenge thy wrongs and thy

crimes, revenge cannot come from me,— he is Fanny's grandfather and — *Camilla's uncle!* ”

And Camilla, when that uncle had dismissed her for the night, sat down thoughtfully in her own room. The dark eyes of Vaudemont seemed still to shine on her; his voice yet rung in her ear; the wild tales of daring and danger with which Liancourt had associated his name yet haunted her bewildered fancy. She started, frightened at her own thoughts. She took from her bosom some lines that Sidney had addressed to her, and as she read and re-read, her spirit became calmed to its wonted and faithful melancholy. Vaudemont was forgotten, and the name of Sidney yet murmured on her lips, when sleep came to renew the image of the absent one, and paint in dreams the fairy-land of a happy Future!

CHAPTER VI.

RING ON, ye bells — most pleasant in your chime!

WILSON: *Isle of Palms.*

O fairy child! What can I wish for thee? — *Ibid.*

VAUDEMONT remained six days in London without going to H——, and on each of those days he paid a visit to Lord Lilburne. On the seventh day, the invalid being much better, though still unable to leave his room, Camilla returned to Berkeley Square; on the same day, Vaudemont went once more to see Simon and poor Fanny.

As he approached the door, he heard from the window, partially opened, for the day was clear and fine, Fanny's sweet voice. She was chanting one of the simple songs she had promised to learn by heart; and Vaudemont, though but a poor judge of the art, was struck and affected by the music of the voice and the earnest depth of the feeling. He paused opposite the window and called her by her name. Fanny looked forth joyously, and ran, as usual, to open the door to him.

"Oh, you have been so long away; but I already know many of the songs: they say so much that I always wanted to say!"

Vaudemont smiled, but languidly.

"How strange it is," said Fanny, musingly, "that there should be so much in a piece of paper! for, after all," pointing to the open page of her book, "this *is* but a piece of paper,—only there is life in it!"

"Ay," said Vaudemont, gloomily, and far from seizing the subtle delicacy of Fanny's thought,—*her* mind dwelling upon Poetry and *his* upon Law,—"*ay*, and do you know that upon a mere scrap of paper, if I could but find it, may depend my whole fortune, my whole happiness, all that I care for in life?"

"Upon a scrap of paper? Oh, how I wish I could find it! Ah, you look as if you thought I should never be wise enough for that!"

Vaudemont, not listening to her, uttered a deep sigh. Fanny approached him timidly.

"Do not sigh, brother,—I can't bear to hear you sigh. You are changed. Have *you*, too, not been happy?"

"Happy, Fanny! yes, lately very happy,—too happy!"

"Happy, have you? and *I*—" The girl stopped short; her tone had been that of sadness and reproach, and she stopped,—why she knew not, but she felt her heart sink within her. Fanny suffered him to pass her, and he went straight to his own room. Her eyes followed him wistfully; it was not his habit to leave her thus abruptly. The family meal of the day was over, and it was an hour before Vaudemont descended to the parlour. Fanny had put aside the songs; she had no heart to recommence those gentle studies that had been so sweet,—they had drawn no pleasure, no praise from him. She was seated idly and listlessly beside the silent old man, who every day grew more and more silent still. She turned her head as Vaudemont entered, and her pretty lip pouted as that of a neglected child; but he did not heed it, and the pout vanished, and tears rushed to her eyes.

Vaudemont *was* changed. His countenance was thoughtful

and overcast, his manner abstracted. He addressed a few words to Simon, and then, seating himself by the window, leaned his cheek on his hand, and was soon lost in revery. Fanny, finding that he did not speak, and after stealing many a long and earnest glance at his motionless attitude and gloomy brow, rose gently, and gliding to him with her light step, said in a trembling voice,—

“Are you in pain, brother?”

“No, pretty one!”

“Then why won’t you speak to Fanny? Will you not walk with her? Perhaps my grandfather will come too.”

“Not this evening. I shall go out; but it will be alone.”

“Where? Has not Fanny been good? I have not been out since you left us. And the grave, brother! I sent Sarah with the flowers, but—”

Vaudemont rose abruptly. The mention of the grave brought back his thoughts from the dreaming channel into which they had flowed. Fanny, whose very childishness had once so soothed him, now disturbed; he felt the want of that complete solitude which makes the atmosphere of growing passion; he muttered some scarcely audible excuse, and quitted the house. Fanny saw him no more that evening. He did not return till midnight. But Fanny did not sleep till she heard his step on the stairs, and his chamber-door close; and when she did sleep, her dreams were disturbed and painful. The next morning, when they met at breakfast (for Vaudemont did not return to London), her eyes were red and heavy, and her cheek pale; and, still buried in meditation, Vaudemont’s eye, usually so kind and watchful, did not detect those signs of a grief that Fanny could not have explained. After breakfast, however, he asked her to walk out; and her face brightened as she hastened to put on her bonnet, and take her little basket full of fresh flowers which she had already sent Sarah forth to purchase.

“Fanny,” said Vaudemont, as leaving the house, he saw the basket on her arm, “to-day you may place some of those flowers on *another* tombstone! Poor child, what natural goodness there is in that heart! what pity that.—”

He paused. Fanny looked delightedly in his face.

"You were praising me,—*you!* And what is a pity, brother?"

While she spoke, the sound of the joy-bells was heard near at hand.

"Hark!" said Vaudemont, forgetting her question, and almost gayly,— "hark! I accept the omen. It is a marriage peal!"

He quickened his steps, and they reached the churchyard.

There was a crowd already assembled, and Vaudemont and Fanny paused, and leaning over the little gate, looked on.

"Why are these people here, and why does the bell ring so merrily?"

"There is to be a wedding, Fanny."

"I have heard of a wedding very often," said Fanny, with a pretty look of puzzlement and doubt, "but I don't know exactly what it means. Will you tell me?—and the bells, too!"

"Yes, Fanny, those bells toll but three times for man! The first time, when he comes into the world; the last time, when he leaves it; the time between, when he takes to his side a partner in all the sorrows, in all the joys that yet remain to him; and who, even when the last bell announces his death to this earth, may yet, for ever and ever, be his partner in that world to come, — that heaven, where they who are as innocent as you, Fanny, may hope to live and to love each other in a land in which there are no graves!"

"And *this* bell?"

"Tolls for that partnership,—for the wedding!"

"I think I understand you. And they who are to be wed are happy?"

"Happy, Fanny, if they love, and their love continue. Oh, conceive the happiness to know some one person dearer to you than your own self, some one breast into which you can pour every thought, every grief, every joy! one person, who, if all the rest of the world were to calumniate or forsake you, would never wrong you by a harsh thought or an unjust word; who would cling to you the closer in sickness, in poverty, in

care; who would sacrifice all things to you, and for whom you would sacrifice all; from whom, except by death, night or day, you must be never divided; whose smile is ever at your hearth; who has no tears while you are well and happy, and your love the same. Fanny, such is marriage, if they who marry have hearts and souls to feel that there is no bond on earth so tender and so sublime. There is an opposite picture, — I will not draw *that*! And as it is, Fanny, you cannot understand me!”

He turned away; and Fanny’s tears were falling like rain upon the grass below,—he did not see them! He entered the churchyard, for the bell now ceased; the ceremony was to begin. He followed the bridal party into the church, and Fanny, lowering her veil, crept after him, awed and trembling.

They stood, unobserved, at a little distance, and heard the service.

The betrothed were of the middle class of life, young, both comely; and their behaviour was such as suited the reverence and sanctity of the rite. Vaudemont stood looking on intently, with his arms folded on his breast. Fanny leaned behind him, and apart from all, against one of the pews. And still in her hand, while the priest was solemnizing Marriage, she held the flowers intended for the Grave. Even to *that* MORNING—hushed, calm, earnest, with her mysterious and un conjectured heart—her shape brought a thought of NIGHT!

When the ceremony was over, when the bride fell on her mother’s breast, and wept; and then, when turning thence, her eyes met the bridegroom’s and the tears were all smiled away; when in that one rapid interchange of looks spoke all that holy love can speak to love, and with timid frankness she placed her hand in his to whom she had just vowed her life,—a thrill went through the hearts of those present. Vaudemont sighed heavily. He heard his sigh echoed, but by one that had in its sound no breath of pain. He turned; Fanny had raised her veil; her eyes met his, moistened, but bright, soft, and her cheeks were rosy-red. Vaudemont re-

coiled before that gaze, and turned from the church. The persons interested retired to the vestry to sign their names in the registry; the crowd dispersed, and Vaudemont and Fanny stood alone in the burial-ground.

"Look, Fanny," said the former, pointing to a tomb that stood far from his mother's (for *those* ashes were too hallowed for such a neighbourhood). "Look yonder; it is a new tomb, Fanny, let us approach it. Can you read what is there inscribed?"

The inscription was simply this:—

To W— G—

MAN SEES THE DEED,

GOD THE CIRCUMSTANCE.

JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED.

"Fanny, this tomb fulfils your pious wish: it is to the memory of him whom you called your father. Whatever was his life here, whatever sentence it hath received, Heaven at least will not condemn *your* piety, if you honour one who was good to *you*, and place flowers, however idle, even over that grave."

"It is his—my father's—and you have thought of this for me!" said Fanny, taking his hand, and sobbing. "And I have been thinking that you were not so kind to me as you were!"

"Have I not been so kind to you? Nay, forgive me, I am not happy."

"Not?—you said yesterday you had been *too* happy."

"To remember happiness is not to be happy, Fanny."

"That's true—and—"

Fanny stopped; and, as she bent over the tomb, musing, Vaudemont, willing to leave her undisturbed, and feeling bitterly how little his conscience could vindicate, though it might find palliation for, the dark man who slept *not* there, retired a few paces.

At this time the new-married pair, with their witnesses, the clergyman, etc., came from the vestry, and crossed the path. Fanny, as she turned from the tomb, saw them, and stood still, looking earnestly at the bride.

"What a lovely face!" said the mother. "Is it—yes, it is—the poor idiot girl."

"Ah!" said the bridegroom, tenderly, "and she, Mary, beautiful as she is, *she* can never make another as happy as you have made me."

Vaudemont heard, and his heart felt sad. "Poor Fanny! And yet, but for that affliction, *I* might have loved her, ere I met the fatal face of the daughter of my foe!" And with a deep compassion, an inexpressible and holy fondness, he moved to Fanny.

"Come, my child; now let us go home."

"Stay," said Fanny,— "you forget." And she went to strew the flowers still left over Catherine's grave.

"Will my mother," thought Vaudemont, "forgive me, if I have other thoughts than hate and vengeance for that house which builds its greatness over her slandered name?" He groaned, — and that grave had lost its melancholy charm.

CHAPTER VII.

OF all men, I say,
That dare, for 't is a desperate adventure,
Wear on their free necks the yoke of women,
Give me a soldier. — *Knight of Malta.*

So lightly doth this little boat
Upon the scarce-touched billows float;
So careless doth she seem to be,
Thus left by herself on the homeless sea,
To lie there with her cheerful sail,
Till Heaven shall send some gracious gale.

WILSON: *Isle of Palms.*

VAUDEMONT returned that evening to London, and found at his lodgings a note from Lord Lilburne, stating that as his gout was now somewhat mitigated, his physician had recommended him to try change of air; that Beaufort Court was in

one of the western counties, in a genial climate; that he was therefore going thither the next day for a short time; that he had asked some of M. de Vaudemont's countrymen, and a few other friends, to enliven the circle of a dull country-house; that Mr. and Mrs. Beaufort would be delighted to see M. de Vaudemont also, — and that his compliance with their invitation would be a charity to M. de Vaudemont's faithful and obliged Lilburne.

The first sensation of Vaudemont on reading this effusion was delight. "I shall see *her*!" he cried; "I shall be under the same roof!" But the glow faded at once from his cheek. The roof! — what roof? Be the guest where he held himself the lord! be the guest of Robert Beaufort! Was that all? Did he not meditate the deadliest war which civilized life admits of — the *War of Law*, — war for name, property, that very hearth with all its household gods against this man: could he receive his hospitality? "And what then!" he exclaimed, as he paced to and fro the room, — "because her father wronged me, and because I would claim mine own, must I therefore exclude from my thoughts, from my sight, an image so fair and gentle, — the one who knelt by my side, an infant, to that hard man? Is hate so noble a passion that it is not to admit one glimpse of Love? *Love!* what word is that? Let me beware in time!" He paused in fierce self-contest, and throwing open the window, gasped for air. The street in which he lodged was situated in the neighbourhood of St. James's; and at that very moment, as if to defeat all opposition and to close the struggle, Mrs. Beaufort's barouche drove by, Camilla at her side. Mrs. Beaufort, glancing up, languidly bowed; and Camilla herself perceived him, and he saw her change colour as she inclined her head. He gazed after them almost breathless till the carriage disappeared; and then reclosing the window, he sat down to collect his thoughts, and again to reason with himself. But still, as he reasoned, he saw ever before him that blush and that smile. At last he sprang up, and a noble and bright expression elevated the character of his face. "Yes, if I enter that house, if I eat that man's bread, and drink of his cup, I must forego,

not justice—not what is due to my mother's name—but whatever belongs to hate and vengeance. If I enter that house, and if Providence permit me the means whereby to regain my rights, why she—the innocent one—*she* may be the means of saving her father from ruin, and stand like an angel by that boundary where justice runs into revenge! Besides, is it not my duty to discover Sidney? Here is the only clew I shall obtain.” With these thoughts he hesitated no more; he decided he would not reject this hospitality, since it might be in his power to pay it back ten thousand-fold. “And who knows,” he murmured again, “if Heaven, in throwing this sweet being in my way, might not have designed to subdue and chasten in me the angry passions I have so long fed on? I have seen her,—can I *now* hate her father?”

He sent off his note accepting the invitation. When he had done so, was he satisfied? He had taken as noble and as large a view of the duties thereby imposed on him as he well could take; but something whispered at his heart, “There is weakness in thy generosity, —darest thou love the daughter of Robert Beaufort?” And his heart had no answer to this voice.

The rapidity with which love is ripened depends less upon the actual number of years that have passed over the soil in which the seed is cast than upon the freshness of the soil itself. A young man who lives the ordinary life of the world, and who fritters away, rather than exhausts, his feelings, upon a variety of quick succeeding subjects—the Cynthias of the minute—is not apt to form a real passion at the first sight. Youth is inflammable only when the *heart* is young!

There are certain times of life when, in either sex, the affections are prepared, as it were, to be impressed with the first fair face that attracts the fancy and delights the eye. Such times are when the heart has been long solitary, and when some interval of idleness and rest succeeds to periods of harsher and more turbulent excitement. It was precisely such a period in the life of Vaudemont. Although his ambition had been for many years his dream and his sword his

mistress, yet naturally affectionate and susceptible of strong emotion, he had often repined at his lonely lot. By degrees the boy's fantasy and reverence which had wound themselves round the image of Eugénie subsided into that gentle and tender melancholy which, perhaps by weakening the strength of the sterner thoughts, leaves us inclined rather to receive than to resist a new attachment; and on the verge of the sweet Memory trembles the sweet Hope. The suspension of his profession, his schemes, his struggles, his career, left his passions unemployed. Vaudemont was thus unconsciously prepared to love. As we have seen, his first and earliest feelings directed themselves to Fanny; but he had so immediately detected the danger, and so immediately recoiled from nursing those thoughts and fancies, without which love dies for want of food, for a person to whom he ascribed the affliction of an imbecility which would give to such a sentiment all the attributes either of the weakest rashness or of dishonour approaching to sacrilege, that the wings of the deity were scared away the instant their very shadow fell upon his mind. And thus when Camilla rose upon him his heart was free to receive her image. Her graces, her accomplishments, a certain nameless charm that invested her, pleased him even more than her beauty; the recollections connected with that first time in which he had ever beheld her were also grateful and endearing; the harshness with which her parents spoke to her moved his compassion, and addressed itself to a temper peculiarly alive to the generosity that leans towards the weak and the wronged; the engaging mixture of mildness and gayety with which she tended her peevish and sneering uncle convinced him of her better and more enduring qualities of disposition and womanly heart. And even—so strange and contradictory are our feelings—the very remembrance that she was connected with a family so hateful to him made her own image the more bright from the darkness that surrounded it. For was it not with the daughter of his foe that the lover of Verona fell in love at first sight? And is not *that* a common type of us all,—as if Passion delighted in contradictions? As the Diver, in Schiller's exquisite ballad, fastened upon

the rock of coral in the midst of the gloomy sea, so we cling the more gratefully to whatever of fair thought and gentle shelter smiles out to us in the depths of Hate and Strife.

But, perhaps, Vaudemont would not so suddenly and so utterly have rendered himself to a passion that began already completely to master his strong spirit, if he had not, from Camilla's embarrassment, her timidity, her blushes, intoxicated himself with the belief that his feelings were not unshared. And who knows not that such a belief, once cherished, ripens our own love to a development in which hours are as years?

It was, then, with such emotions as made him almost insensible to every thought but the luxury of breathing the same air as his cousin, which swept from his mind the Past, the Future, leaving nothing but a joyous, a breathless PRESENT on the Face of Time, that he repaired to Beaufort Court. He did not return to H—— before he went; but he wrote to Fanny a short and hurried line to explain that he might be absent for some days at least, and promised to write again if he should be detained longer than he anticipated.

In the meanwhile, one of those successive revolutions which had marked the eras in Fanny's moral existence took its date from that last time they had walked and conversed together.

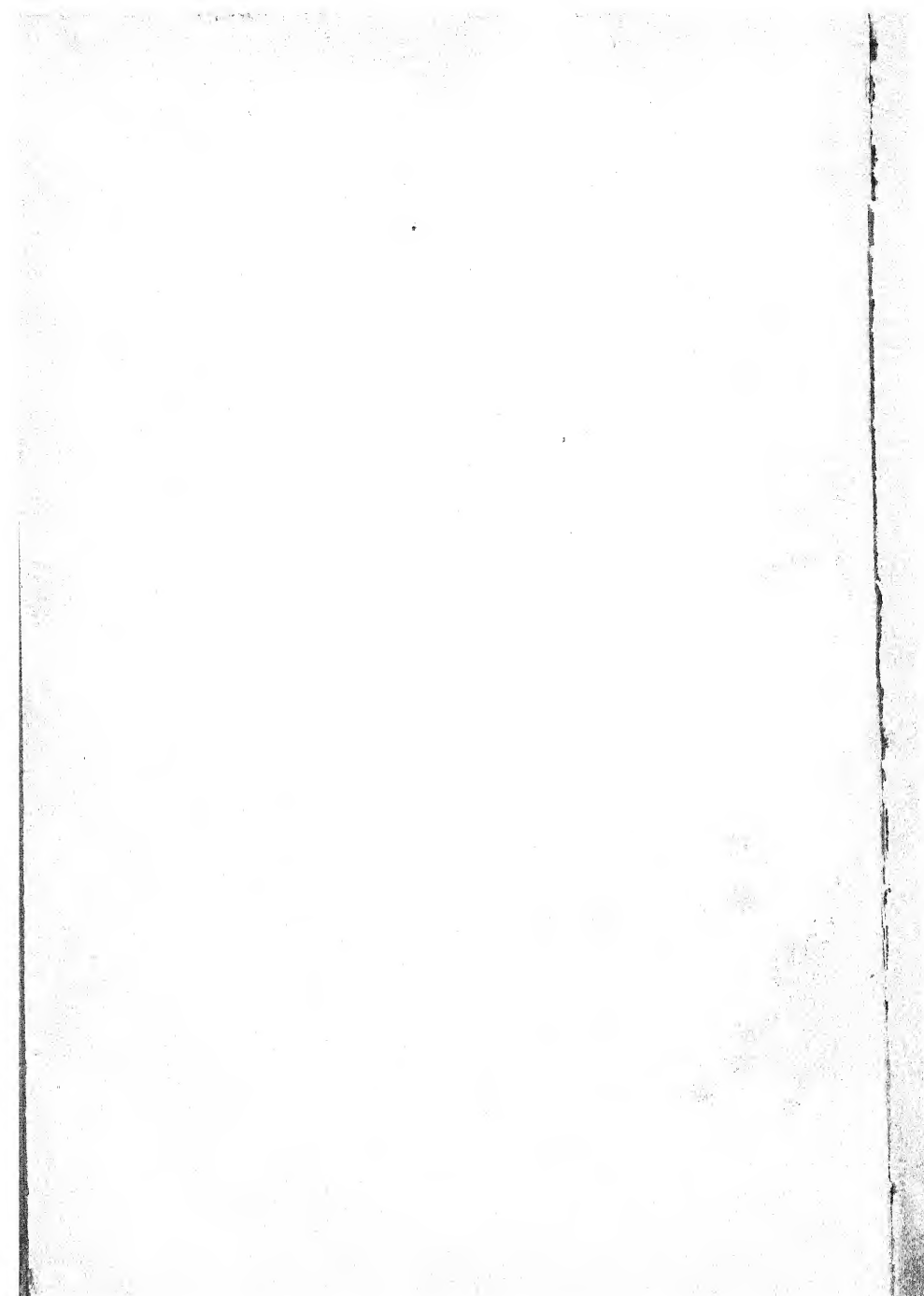
The very evening of that day, some hours after Philip was gone and after Simon had retired to rest, Fanny was sitting before the dying fire in the little parlour in an attitude of deep and pensive revery. The old woman-servant, Sarah, who, very different from Mrs. Boxer, loved Fanny with her whole heart, came into the room as was her wont before going to bed, to see that the fire was duly out, and all safe: and as she approached the hearth, she started to see Fanny still up.

"Dear heart alive!" she said; "why, Miss Fanny, you will catch your death of cold, — what are you thinking about?"

"Sit down, Sarah; I want to speak to you." Now, though Fanny was exceedingly kind and attached to Sarah, she was



"IT WAS LIKE THE FAIRY AND THE WITCH TOGETHER."



seldom communiative to her, or indeed to any one. It was usually in its own silence and darkness that that lovely mind worked out its own doubts.

"Do you, my sweet young lady? I'm sure anything I can do—" and Sarah seated herself in her master's great chair, and drew it close to Fanny. There was no light in the room but the expiring fire, and it threw upward a pale glimmer on the two faces bending over it, — the one so strangely beautiful, so smooth, so blooming, so exquisite in its youth and innocence; the other withered, wrinkled, meagre, and astute. It was like the Fairy and the Witch together.

"Well, Miss," said the crone, observing that, after a considerable pause, Fanny was still silent, — "well —"

"Sarah, I have seen a wedding!"

"Have you?" and the old woman laughed. "Oh, I heard it was to be to-day! — young Waldron's wedding! Yes, they have been long sweethearts."

"Were you ever married, Sarah?"

"Lord bless you, yes! and a very good husband I had, poor man! But he's dead these many years; and if you had not taken me, I must have gone to the workhus."

"He is dead! Wasn't it very hard to live after that, Sarah?"

"The Lord strengthens the hearts of widders!" observed Sarah, sanctimoniously.

"Did you marry your brother, Sarah?" said Fanny, playing with the corner of her apron.

"My brother!" exclaimed the old woman, aghast. "La! Miss, you must not talk in that way, — it's quite wicked and heathenish! One must not marry one's brother!"

"No!" said Fanny, tremblingly, and turning very pale, even by that light. "No! — are you sure of that?"

"It is the wickedest thing even to talk about, my dear young mistress; but you're like a babby unborn!"

Fanny was silent for some moments. At length she said, unconscious that she was speaking aloud, "But he is *not* my brother, after all!"

"Oh, Miss, fie! Are you letting your pretty head run on

the handsome gentleman? *You*, too, — dear, dear! I see we're all alike, we poor felicitous! You! who'd have thought it? Oh, Miss Fanny, you'll break your heart if you go on for to fancy any such thing."

"Any what thing?"

"Why, that that gentleman will marry you! I'm sure, tho' he's so simple like, he's some great gentleman! They say his hoss is worth a hundred pounds! Dear, dear! why didn't I ever think of this before? He must be a very wicked man. I see, now, why he comes here. I'll speak to him, *that* I will! — a *very* wicked man!"

Sarah was startled from her indignation by Fanny's rising suddenly, and standing before her in the flickering twilight, almost like a shape transformed, — so tall did she seem, so stately, so dignified.

"Is it of *him* that you are speaking?" said she, in a voice of calm but deep resentment, — "of him! If so, Sarah, we two can live no more in the same house."

And these words were said with a propriety and collectedness that even, through all her terror, showed at once to Sarah how much they now wronged Fanny who had suffered their lips to repeat the parrot-cry of the "idiot girl!"

"Oh, gracious me! miss — ma'am — I am so sorry; I'd rather bite out my tongue than say a word to offend you. It was only my love for you, dear innocent creature that you are!" and the honest woman sobbed with real passion as she clasped Fanny's hand. "There have been so many young persons, good and harmless, yes, even as you are, ruined. But you don't understand me. Miss Fanny, hear me; I must try and say what I would say. That man, that gentleman — so proud, so well-dressed, so grandlike — will never marry *you*, — never, never. And if ever he says he does love you, and you say you loves him, and you two *don't* marry, you will be ruined and wicked, and die — die of a broken heart!"

The earnestness of Sarah's manner subdued and almost awed Fanny. She sank down again in her chair, and suffered the old woman to caress and weep over her hand for some moments, in a silence that concealed the darkest and most

agitated feelings Fanny's life had hitherto known. At length she said, —

"Why may he not marry me if he loves me? He is not my brother, — indeed he is not! I'll never call him so again."

"He cannot marry you," said Sarah, resolved, with a sort of rude nobleness, to persevere in what she felt to be a duty; "I don't say anything about money, because that does not always signify. But he cannot marry you, because — because people who are dedicated one way never marry those who are dedicated and brought up in another. A gentleman of that kind requires a wife to know — oh — to know ever so much; and *you* —"

"Sarah," interrupted Fanny, rising again, but this time with a smile on her face, "don't say anything more about it; I forgive you, if you promise never to speak unkindly of him again, — never, never, never, Sarah!"

"But may I just tell him that — that —"

"That what?"

"That you are so young and innocent, and has no perceptor like; and that if you were to love him it would be a shame in him — that it would?"

And then (oh, no, Fanny, there was nothing clouded *now* in in your reason!) — and then the woman's alarm, the modesty, the instinct, the terror came upon her, —

"Never! never! I will not love him; I do not love him, indeed, Sarah. If you speak to him, I will never look you in the face again. It is all past, — all, dear Sarah!"

She kissed the old woman; and Sarah, fancying that her sagacity and counsel had prevailed, promised all she was asked; so they went upstairs together — friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

As the wind

Sobs, an uncertain sweetness comes from out
The orange-trees.

Rise up, Olympia. She sleeps soundly. Ho!
Stirring at last.

BARRY CORNWALL.

THE next day, Fanny was seen by Sarah counting the little hoard that she had so long and so painfully saved for her benefactor's tomb. The money was no longer wanted for *that* object. Fanny had found another; she said nothing to Sarah or to Simon; but there was a strange complacent smile upon her lip as she busied herself in her work that puzzled the old woman. Late at noon came the postman's unwonted knock at the door. A letter! — a letter for Miss Fanny. A letter! — the first she had ever received in her life! And it was from *him*! and it began with "Dear Fanny"! Vaudemont had called her "Dear Fanny" a hundred times, and the expression had become a matter of course; but "Dear Fanny" seemed so very different when it was *written*. The letter could not well be shorter, nor, all things considered, colder. But the girl found no fault with it. It began with "Dear Fanny," and it ended with "Yours truly." "Yours truly — *mine* truly — and how kind to write at all!" Now it so happened that Vaudemont, having never merged the art of the penman into that rapid scrawl into which people who are compelled to write hurriedly and constantly degenerate, wrote a remarkably good hand, — bold, clear, symmetrical, — almost too good a hand for one who was not to make money by calligraphy; and after Fanny had got the words by heart, she stole gently to a cupboard and took forth some specimens of her own hand, in the shape of house and work memoranda, and extracts which, the better to help her memory, she had made

from the poem-book Vaudemont had given her. She gravely laid his letter by the side of these specimens, and blushed at the contrast; yet, after all, her own writing, though trembling and irresolute, was far from a bad or vulgar hand. But emulation was now fairly roused within her. Vaudemont, preoccupied by more engrossing thoughts, and, indeed, forgetting a danger which had seemed so thoroughly to have passed away, did not in his letter caution Fanny against going out alone. She remarked this; and having completely recovered her own alarm at the attempt that had been made on her liberty, she thought she was now released from her promise to guard against a past and imaginary peril. So after dinner she slipped out alone and went to the mistress of the school where she had received her elementary education. She had ever since continued her acquaintance with that lady, who, kind-hearted, and touched by her situation, often employed her industry, and was far from blind to the improvement that had for some time been silently working in the mind of her old pupil.

Fanny had a long conversation with this lady, and she brought back a bundle of books. The light might have been seen that night, and many nights after, burning long and late from her little window. And having recovered her old freedom of habits, which Simon, poor man, did not notice, and which Sarah, thinking that anything was better than moping at home, did not remonstrate against, Fanny went out regularly for two hours, or sometimes for even a longer period, every evening after old Simon had composed himself to the nap that filled up the interval between dinner and tea.

In a very short time — a time that with ordinary stimulants would have seemed marvellously short — Fanny's handwriting was not the same thing; her manner of talking became different; she no longer called herself "Fanny" when she spoke; the music of her voice was more quiet and settled; her sweet expression of face was more thoughtful; the eyes seemed to have deepened in their very colour; she was no longer heard chanting to herself as she tripped along. The books that she nightly fed on had passed into her mind; the poetry that had ever unconsciously sported round her young years began now

the turbulence and agitation of his half-tamed breast, now excited by a kind of frenzy of hope and fear, gave a vent and release — was a sport in which he was yet more fitted to excel. His horsemanship, his daring, the stone walls he leaped and the floods through which he dashed, furnished his companions with wondering tale and comment on their return home. Mr. Marsden, who, with some other of Arthur's early friends, had been invited to Beaufort Court, in order to welcome its expected heir, and who retained all the prudence which had distinguished him of yore when, having ridden over old Simon, he dismounted to examine the knees of his horse; Mr. Marsden, a skilful huntsman, who rode the most experienced horses in the world, and who generally contrived to be in at the death without having leaped over anything higher than a hurdle, suffering the bolder quadruped (in case what is called the "knowledge of the country" — that is, the knowledge of gaps and gates — failed him) to perform the more dangerous feats alone, as he quietly scrambled over or scrambled through upon foot, and remounted the well-taught animal when it halted after the exploit, safe and sound, — Mr. Marsden declared that he never saw a rider with so little judgment as M. de Vaudemont, and that the devil was certainly in him.

This sort of reputation, commonplace and merely physical as it was in itself, had a certain effect upon Camilla, — it might be an effect of fear. I do not say, for I do not know, what her feelings towards Vaudemont exactly were. As the calmest natures are often those the most hurried away by their contraries, so, perhaps, he awed and dazzled rather than pleased her, — at least, he certainly forced himself on her interest. Still, she would have started in terror if any one had said to her, "Do you love your betrothed less than when you met by that happy lake?" and her heart would have indignantly rebuked the questioner. The letters of her lover were still long and frequent; hers were briefer and more subdued. But then there was constraint in the correspondence, — it was submitted to her mother.

Whatever might be Vaudemont's manner to Camilla when-

ever occasion threw them alone together, he certainly did not make his attentions glaring enough to be remarked. His eye watched her rather than his lip addressed, he kept as much aloof as possible from the rest of her family, and his customary bearing was silent even to gloom. But there were moments when he indulged in a fitful exuberance of spirits which had something strained and unnatural. He had outlived Lord Lilburne's short liking; for since he had resolved no longer to keep watch on that noble gamester's method of play, he played but little himself, and Lord Lilburne saw that he had no chance of ruining him,—there was, therefore, no longer any reason to like him. But this was not all; when Vaudemont had been at the house somewhat more than two weeks, Lilburne, petulant and impatient, whether at his refusals to join the card-table, or at the moderation with which, when he did, he confined his ill-luck to petty losses, one day limped up to him, as he stood at the embrasure of the window, gazing on the wide lands beyond, and said,—

“Vaudemont, you are bolder in hunting, they tell me, than you are at whist.”

“Honours don't tell against one — over a hedge!”

“What do you mean?” said Lilburne, rather haughtily.

Vaudemont was at that moment in one of those bitter moods when the sense of his situation, the sight of the usurper in his home, often swept away the gentler thoughts inspired by his fatal passion; and the tone of Lord Lilburne, and his loathing to the man, were too much for his temper.

“Lord Lilburne,” he said, and his lip curled, “if you had been born poor, you would have made a great fortune,—you play luckily.”

“How am I to take this, sir?”

“As you please,” answered Vaudemont, calmly, but with an eye of fire; and he turned away.

Lilburne remained on the spot very thoughtful. “Hum! he suspects me. I cannot quarrel on such ground,—the suspicion itself dishonours me; I must seek another.”

The next day, Lilburne, who was familiar with Mr. Marsden (though the latter gentleman never played at the same table),

asked that prudent person after breakfast if he happened to have his pistols with him.

"Yes; I always take them into the country,—one may as well practise when one has the opportunity. Besides, sportsmen are often quarrelsome; and if it is known that one shoots well, it keeps one out of quarrels!"

"Very true," said Lilburne, rather admiringly. "I have made the same remark myself when I was younger. I have not shot with a pistol for some years. I am well enough now to walk out with the help of a stick. Suppose we practise for half an hour or so."

"With all my heart," said Mr. Marsden.

The pistols were brought, and they strolled forth; Lord Lilburne found his hand out.

"As I never hunt now," said the peer, and he gnashed his teeth and glanced at his maimed limb,— "for though lameness would not prevent my keeping my seat, violent exercise hurts my leg, and Brodie says any fresh accident might bring on tic-douloureux,—and as my gout does not permit me to join the shooting parties at present, it would be a kindness in you to lend me your pistols; it would while away an hour or so; though, thank Heaven, my duelling days are over!"

"Certainly," said Mr. Marsden; and the pistols were consigned to Lord Lilburne.

Four days from the date, as Mr. Marsden, Vaudemont, and some other gentlemen were making for the covers, they came upon Lord Lilburne, who, in a part of the park not within sight or sound of the house, was amusing himself with Mr. Marsden's pistols, which Dykeman was at hand to load for him.

He turned round, not at all disconcerted by the interruption.

"You have no idea how I've improved, Marsden,—just see!" and he pointed to a glove nailed to a tree. "I've hit that mark twice in five times; and every time I have gone straight enough along the line to have killed my man."

"Ay, the mark itself does not so much signify," said Mr. Marsden,— "at least, not in actual duelling; the great thing is to be in the line."

While he spoke, Lord Lilburne's ball went a third time through the glove. His cold bright eye turned on Vaudemont as he said, with a smile,—

"They tell me you shoot well with a fowling-piece, my dear Vaudemont,—are you equally adroit with a pistol?"

"You may see, if you like. But *you take aim*, Lord Lilburne,—that would be of no use in English duelling. Permit me."

He walked to the glove and tore from it one of the fingers, which he fastened separately to the tree; took the pistol from Dykeman as he walked past him, gained the spot whence to fire, turned at once round, without apparent aim, and the finger fell to the ground.

Lilburne stood aghast.

"That's wonderful!" said Marsden, "quite wonderful! Where the devil did you get such a knack?—for it is only knack after all."

"I lived for many years in a country where the practice was constant, where all that belongs to rifle-shooting was a necessary accomplishment,—a country in which man had often to contend against the wild beast. In civilized states man himself supplies the place of the wild beast; but we don't hunt *him*! Lord Lilburne," and this was added with a smiling and disdainful whisper, "you must practise a little more."

But disregarding the advice, from that day Lord Lilburne's morning occupation was gone; he thought no longer of a duel with Vaudemont. As soon as the sportsman had left him he bade Dykeman take up the pistols, and walked straight home into the library, where Robert Beaufort, who was no sportsman, generally spent his mornings.

He flung himself into an armchair, and said, as he stirred the fire with unusual vehemence,—

"Beaufort, I'm very sorry I asked you to invite Vaudemont. He's a very ill-bred, disagreeable fellow."

Beaufort threw down his steward's account-book, on which he was employed, and replied,—

"Lilburne, I have never had an easy moment since that

man has been in the house. As he was your guest, I did not like to speak before; but don't you observe—you *must* observe—how like he is to the old family portraits? The more I have examined him, the more another resemblance grows upon me. In a word," said Robert, pausing and breathing hard, "if his name were not Vaudemont; if his history were not, apparently, so well known,—I should say, I should swear, that it is Philip Morton who sleeps under this roof!"

"Ha!" said Lilburne, with an earnestness that surprised Beaufort, who expected to have heard his brother-in-law's sneering sarcasm at his fears. "The likeness you speak of to the old portraits did strike me; it struck Marsden, too, the other day, as we were passing through the picture-gallery; and Marsden remarked it aloud to Vaudemont. I remember now that he changed countenance, and made no answer. Hush, hush! hold your tongue! Let me think, let me think. This Philip—yes—yes—I and Arthur saw him with—with Gawtreys, in Paris—"

"Gawtreys! was that the name of the rogue he was said to—"

"Yes, yes, yes. Ah, now I guess the meaning of those looks, those words," muttered Lilburne between his teeth. "This pretension to the name of Vaudemont was always apocryphal, the story always but half believed,—the invention of a woman in love with him; the claim on your property is made at the very time he appears in England. Ha! have you a newspaper there? Give it me. No, 'tis not in this paper. Ring the bell for the file!"

"What's the matter? You terrify me!" gasped out Mr. Beaufort, as he rang the bell.

"Why, have you not seen an advertisement repeated several times within the last month?"

"I never read advertisements,—except in the county paper, if land is to be sold."

"Nor I, often; but this caught my eye. John,"—here the servant entered,—"bring the file of the newspapers. The name of the witness whom Mrs. Morton appealed to was

Smith, the same name as the captain; what was the Christian name?"

"I don't remember."

"Here are the papers,—shut the door,—and here is the advertisement":—

"If Mr. William Smith, son of Jeremiah Smith, who formerly rented the farm of Shipdale-Bury, under the late Right Hon. Charles Leopold Beaufort [that's your uncle], and who emigrated in the year 18— to Australia, will apply to Mr. Barlow, Solicitor, Essex Street, Strand, he will hear of something to his advantage."

"Good heavens! why did not you mention this to me before?"

"Because I did not think it of any importance. In the first place, there might be some legacy left to the man, quite distinct from your business,—indeed, *that* was the probable supposition; or even if connected with the claim, such an advertisement might be but a despicable attempt to frighten you. Never mind; don't look so pale! After all, this is a proof that the witness is not found; that Captain Smith is neither *the* Smith, nor has discovered where *the* Smith is!"

"True," observed Mr. Beaufort,— "true, very true."

"Humph!" said Lord Lilburne, who was still rapidly glancing over the file, "here is another advertisement which I never saw before. This looks suspicious."

"If the person who called on the — of September, on Mr. Morton, linendraper, etc., of N—— will renew his application personally or by letter, he may now obtain the information he sought for."

"Morton! The woman's brother! their uncle! it is too clear!"

"But what brings this man, if he be really Philip Morton, — what brings him here? To spy or to threaten?"

"I will get him out of the house this day."

"No, no; turn the watch upon *himself*. I see now; he is attracted by your daughter. Sound her quietly; don't tell her to discourage his confidences; find out if he ever speaks of these Mortons. Ha! I recollect. He has spoken to *me*

of the Mortons, but vaguely,—I forget what. Humph! this is a man of spirit and daring. Watch him, I say,—watch him! When *does* Arthur come back?"

"He has been travelling so slowly, for he still complains of his health, and has had relapses; but he ought to be in Paris this week,—perhaps he is there now. Good heavens! he must not meet this man!"

"Do what I tell you! Get out all from your daughter. Never fear; he can do nothing against you except by law. But if he really like Camilla—"

"He! Philip Morton,—the adventurer, the —"

"He is the eldest son: remember you thought even of accepting the second. He *may* find the witness; he *may* win his suit. If he like Camilla, there *may* be a compromise."

Mr. Beaufort felt as if turned to ice.

"You think him likely to win this infamous suit, then?" he faltered.

"Did not you guard against the possibility by securing the brother? More worth while to do it with this man. Hark ye! the politics of private are like those of public life,—when the state can't crush a demagogue, it should entice him over. If you *can* ruin this dog" (and Lilburne stamped his foot fiercely, forgetful of the gout), "ruin him! hang him! If you can't" (and here with a wry face he caressed the injured foot), "if you can't ('sdeath, what a twinge!), and he can ruin *you*,—bring him into the family, and make *his* secret *ours*! I must go and lie down,—I have over-excited myself."

In great perplexity Beaufort repaired at once to Camilla. His nervous agitation betrayed itself, though he smiled a ghastly smile, and intended to be exceeding cool and collected. His questions, which confused and alarmed her, soon drew out the fact that the very first time Vaudemont had been introduced to her he *had* spoken of the Mortons; and that he had often afterwards alluded to the subject, and seemed at first strongly impressed with the notion that the younger brother was under Beaufort's protection, though at last he appeared reluctantly convinced of the contrary. Robert,

however agitated, preserved at least enough of his natural slyness not to let out that he suspected Vaudemont to be Philip Morton himself, for he feared lest his daughter should betray that suspicion to its object.

"But," he said, with a look meant to win confidence, "I dare say he knows these young men. I should like myself to know more about them. Learn all you can, and tell me, and I say,—I say, Camilla,—he, he, he!—you have made a conquest, you little flirt, you! Did he, this Vaudemont, ever say how much he admired you?"

"He! never!" said Camilla, blushing, and then turning pale.

"But he looks it. Ah, you say nothing, then. Well, well, don't discourage him; that is to say,—yes, don't discourage him. Talk to him as much as you can,—ask him about his own early life. I've a particular wish to know—'tis of great importance to me."

"But, my dear father," said Camilla, trembling, and thoroughly bewildered, "I fear this man,—I fear—I fear—"

Was she going to add, "I fear *myself*"? I know not; but she stopped short, and burst into tears.

"Hang these girls!" muttered Mr. Beaufort,—“always crying when they ought to be of use to one. Go down, dry your eyes, do as I tell you,—get all you can from him. Fear him! yes, I dare say she does!” muttered the poor man, as he closed the door.

From that time what wonder that Camilla's manner to Vaudemont was yet more embarrassed than ever; what wonder that he put his own heart's interpretation on that confusion? Beaufort took care to thrust her more often than before in his way; he suddenly affected a creeping, fawning civility to Vaudemont; he was sure he was fond of music; what *did* he think of that new air Camilla was so fond of? He must be a judge of scenery, he who had seen so much: there were beautiful landscapes in the neighbourhood, and if he would forego his sports, Camilla drew prettily, had an eye for that sort of thing, and was so fond of riding.

Vaudemont was astonished at this change, but his delight

was greater than the astonishment. He began to perceive that his identity was suspected; perhaps Beaufort, more generous than he had deemed him, meant to repay every early wrong or harshness by one inestimable blessing. The generous interpret motives in extremes,—ever too enthusiastic or too severe. Vaudemont felt as if he had wronged the wronger; he began to conquer even his dislike to Robert Beaufort. For some days he was thus thrown much with Camilla; the questions her father forced her to put to him, uttered tremulously and fearfully, seemed to him proof of her interest in his fate. His feelings to Camilla, so sudden in their growth, so ripened and so favoured by the Sub-Ruler of the world,—CIRCUMSTANCE,—might not perhaps have the depth and the calm completeness of that One True Love, of which there are many counterfeits,—and which in Man, at least, possibly requires the touch and mellowness, if not of time, at least of many memories, of perfect and tried conviction of the faith, the worth, the value, and the beauty of the heart to which it clings; but those feelings were, nevertheless, strong, ardent, and intense. He believed himself beloved,—he was in Elysium; but he did not yet declare the passion that beamed in his eyes. No! he would not *yet* claim the hand of Camilla Beaufort, for he imagined the time would soon come when he could claim it, not as the inferior or the suppliant, but as the lord of her father's fate.

CHAPTER X.

HERE'S something got amongst us! — *Knight of Malta.*

Two or three nights after his memorable conversation with Robert Beaufort, as Lord Lilburne was undressing, he said to his valet, —

“Dykeman, I am getting well.”

“Indeed, my lord, I never saw your lordship look better.”

"There you lie. I looked better last year, I looked better the year before, and I looked better and better every year back to the age of twenty-one! But I'm not talking of looks, — no man with money wants looks. I am talking of feelings. I *feel* better. The gout is almost gone. I have been quiet now for a month; that's a long time, — time wasted when, at my age, I have so little time to waste. Besides, as you know, I am very much in love!"

"In love, my lord? I thought that you told me never to speak of —"

"Blockhead! what the deuce was the good of speaking about it when I was wrapped in flannels! I am never in love when I am ill, — who is? I am well now, or nearly so; and I've had things to vex me, — things to make this place very disagreeable; I shall go to town, and before this day week, perhaps, that charming face may enliven the solitude of Fernside. I shall look to it myself now. I see you're going to say something. Spare yourself the trouble! nothing ever goes wrong if *I* myself take it in hand."

The next day Lord Lilburne, who, in truth, felt himself uncomfortable and *gêné* in the presence of Vaudemont; who had won as much as the guests at Beaufort Court seemed inclined to lose; and who made it the rule of his life to consult his own pleasure and amusement before anything else, sent for his post-horses, and informed his brother-in-law of his departure.

"And you leave me alone with this man just when I am convinced that he is the person we suspected! My dear Lilburne, do stay till he goes."

"Impossible! I am between fifty and sixty, — every moment is precious at that time of life. Besides, I've said all I can say, — rest quiet; act on the defensive; entangle this cursed Vaudemont, or Morton, or whoever he be, in the mesh of your daughter's charms, and *then* get rid of him, not before. This can do no harm, let the matter turn out how it will. Read the papers; and send for Blackwell if you want advice on any new advertisements. I don't see that anything more is to be done at present. You can write to me; I shall be at Park

Lane or Fernside. Take care of yourself. You're a lucky fellow, — *you* never have the gout! Good-by."

And in half an hour Lord Lilburne was on the road to London.

The departure of Lilburne was a signal to many others, especially and naturally to those he himself had invited. He had not announced to such visitors his intention of going till his carriage was at the door. This might be delicacy or carelessness, just as people chose to take it; and how they did take it, Lord Lilburne, much too selfish to be well-bred, did not care a rush. The next day half at least of the guests were gone; and even Mr. Marsden, who had been specially invited on Arthur's account, announced that he should go after dinner! he always travelled by night, — he slept well on the road; a day was not lost by it.

"And it is so long since you saw Arthur," said Mr. Beaufort, in remonstrance, "and I expect him every day."

"Very sorry, — best fellow in the world; but the fact is, that I am not very well myself. I want a little sea air; I shall go to Dover or Brighton. But I suppose you will have the house full again about Christmas; in *that* case I shall be delighted to repeat my visit."

The fact was, that Mr. Marsden, without Lilburne's intellect on the one hand or vices on the other, was, like that noble sensualist, one of the broken pieces of the great looking-glass, "SELF." He was noticed in society as always haunting the places where Lilburne played at cards, carefully choosing some other table, and as carefully betting upon Lilburne's side. The card-tables were now broken up; Vaudemont's superiority in shooting, and the manner in which he engrossed the talk of the sportsmen, displeased him. He was bored; he wanted to be off, — and off he went. Vaudemont felt that the time was come for him to depart too; but Robert Beaufort — who felt in his society the painful fascination of the bird with the boa, who hated to see him there and dreaded to see him depart, who had not yet extracted all the confirmation of his persuasions that he required, for Vaudemont easily enough parried the artless questions of Camilla — pressed him to stay

with so eager a hospitality, and made Camilla herself falter out, against her will, and even against her remonstrances — she never before had dared to remonstrate with either father or mother, — “Could not you stay a few days longer?” that Vaudemont was too contented to yield to his own inclinations; and so for some little time longer he continued to move before the eyes of Mr. Beaufort, — stern, sinister, silent, mysterious, like one of the family pictures stepped down from its frame. Vaudemont wrote, however, to Fanny, to excuse his delay; and anxious to hear from her as to her own and Simon’s health, bade her direct her letter to his lodging in London (of which he gave her the address), whence, if he still continued to defer his departure, it would be forwarded to him. He did not do this, however, till he had been at Beaufort Court several days after Lilburne’s departure, and till, in fact, two days before the eventful one which closed his visit.

The party, now greatly diminished, were at breakfast, when the servant entered, as usual, with the letter-bag. Mr. Beaufort, who was always important and pompous in the small ceremonials of life, unlocked the precious deposit with slow dignity, drew forth the newspapers, which he threw on the table and which the gentlemen of the party eagerly seized; then, diving out one by one, jerked first a letter to Camilla, next a letter to Vaudemont, and thirdly, seized a letter for himself.

“I beg that there may be no ceremony, Monsieur de Vaudemont. Pray excuse me and follow my example; I see this letter is from my son;” and he broke the seal.

The letter ran thus: —

MY DEAR FATHER, — Almost as soon as you receive this, I shall be with you. Ill as I am, I can have no peace till I see and consult you. The most startling, the most painful intelligence has just been conveyed to me. It is of a nature not to bear any but personal communication.

Your affectionate son,

ARTHUR BEAUFORT.

BOULOGNE.

P. S. — This will go by the same packet-boat that I shall take myself, and can only reach you a few hours before I arrive.

Mr. Beaufort's trembling hand dropped the letter; he grasped the elbow of the chair to save himself from falling. It was clear! — the same visitor who had persecuted himself had now sought his son! He grew sick; his son might have heard the witness, — might be convinced. His son himself *now* appeared to him as a foe, for the father dreaded the son's honour! He glanced furtively round the table till his eye rested on Vaudemont, and his terror was redoubled, for Vaudemont's face, usually so calm, was animated to an extraordinary degree, as he now lifted it from the letter he had just read. Their eyes met. Robert Beaufort looked on him as a prisoner at the bar looks on the accusing counsel, when he first commences his harangue.

"Mr. Beaufort," said the guest, "the letter you have given me summons me to London on important business, and immediately. Suffer me to send for horses at your earliest convenience."

"What's the matter?" said the feeble and seldom-heard voice of Mrs. Beaufort. "What's the matter, Robert, — is Arthur coming?"

"He comes to-day," said the father, with a deep sigh; and Vaudemont, at that moment rising from his half-finished breakfast, with a bow that included the group and with a glance that lingered on Camilla, as she bent over her own unopened letter (a letter from Winandermere, the seal of which she dared not yet to break), quitted the room. He hastened to his own chamber, and strode to and fro with a stately step, — the step of the *Master*; then, taking forth the letter, he again hurried over its contents. They ran thus:—

DEAR SIR, — At last the missing witness has applied to me. He proves to be, as you conjectured, the same person who had called on Mr. Roger Morton; but as there are some circumstances on which I wish to take your instructions without a moment's delay I shall leave London by the mail, and wait you at D—— (at the principal inn), which is, I understand, twenty miles on the high road from Beaufort Court.

I have the honour to be, sir, yours, etc.,

JOHN BARLOW.

ESSEX STREET.

Vaudemont was yet lost in the emotions that this letter aroused, when they came to announce that his chaise was arrived. As he went down the stairs he met Camilla, who was on the way to her own room.

"Miss Beaufort," said he, in a low and tremulous voice, "in wishing you farewell I may not now say more. I leave you, and, strange to say, I do not regret it, for I go upon an errand that may entitle me to return again, and speak those thoughts which are uppermost in my soul even at this moment."

He raised her hand to his lips as he spoke, and at that moment Mr. Beaufort looked from the door of his own room, and cried, "Camilla." She was too glad to escape. Philip gazed after her light form for an instant, and then hurried down the stairs.

CHAPTER XI.

Longueville. — What! are you married, Beaufort?

Beaufort. — Ay, as fast

As words and hands and hearts and priest

Could make us. — BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER : *Noble Gentleman.*

IN the parlour of the inn at D—— sat Mr. John Barlow. He had just finished his breakfast, and was writing letters and looking over papers connected with his various business, when the door was thrown open, and a gentleman entered abruptly.

"Mr. Beaufort," said the lawyer, rising, "Mr. Philip Beaufort, — for such I now feel you are by right, though," he added, with his usual formal and quiet smile, "not yet by law; and much, very much, remains to be done to make the law and the right the same, — I congratulate you on having something at last to work on. I had begun to despair of finding our witness, after a month's advertising; and had commenced other investigations, of which I will speak to you presently, when yesterday, on my return to town from an errand on your

business, I had the pleasure of a visit from William Smith himself. — My dear sir, do not yet be too sanguine. — It seems that this poor fellow, having known misfortune, was in America when the first fruitless inquiries were made. Long after this he returned to the colony and there met with a brother, who, as I drew from him, was a convict. He helped the brother to escape. They both came to England. William learned from a distant relation, who lent him some little money, of the inquiry that had been set on foot for him; consulted his brother, who desired him to leave all to his management. The brother afterwards assured him that you and Mr. Sidney were both dead; and it seems (for the witness is simple enough to allow me to extract all) this same brother then went to Mr. Beaufort to hold out the threat of a lawsuit, and to offer the sale of the evidence yet existing — ”

“And Mr. Beaufort?”

“I am happy to say, seems to have spurned the offer. Meanwhile William, incredulous of his brother’s report, proceeded to N —, learned nothing from Mr. Morton, met his brother again, and the brother (confessing that he had deceived him in the assertion that you and Mr. Sidney were dead) told him that he had known you in earlier life, and set out to Paris to seek you — ”

“Known me? To Paris?”

“More of this presently. William returned to town, living hardly and penuriously on the little his brother bestowed on him, too melancholy and too poor for the luxury of a newspaper, and never saw our advertisement, till, as luck would have it, his money was out. He had heard nothing further of his brother, and he went for new assistance to the same relation who had before aided him. This relation, to his surprise, received the poor man very kindly, lent him what he wanted, and then asked him if he had not seen our advertisement. The newspaper shown him contained both the advertisements, — that relating to Mr. Morton’s visitor, that containing his own name. He coupled them both together, called on me at once. I was from town on your business. He returned to his own home; the next morning (yesterday

morning) came a letter from his brother, which I obtained from him at last, and with promises that no harm should happen to the writer on account of it."

Vaudemont took the letter and read as follows:—

DEAR WILLIAM,— No go about the youngster I went after: all researches in vane. Paris devilish expensive. Never mind, I have sene the other, the young B——; different sort of fellow from his father; very ill, frightened out of his wits, will go off to the governor, take me with him as far as Bullone. I think we shall settel it now. Mind, as I saide before, don't put *your* foot in it. I send you a Nap in the Seele,— all I can spare.

Yours,

JEREMIAH SMITH.

Direct to me, M. Smith,— always a safe name,— Ship Inn, Bullone."

"Jeremiah — Smith — Jeremiah!"

"Do you know the name, then?" said Mr. Barlow. "Well; the poor man owns that he was frightened at his brother, that he wished to do what is right, that he feared his brother would not let him, that your father was very kind to him, and so he came off at once to me; and I was very luckily at home to assure him that the heir was alive, and prepared to assert his rights. Now then, Mr. Beaufort, we have the witness; but will that suffice us? I fear not. Will the jury believe him with no other testimony at his back? Consider! When he was gone I put myself in communication with some officers at Bow Street about this brother of his,— a most notorious character, commonly called in the police slang *Dashing Jerry*—"

"Ah! Well, proceed!"

"Your one witness, then, is a very poor, penniless man; his brother, a rogue, a convict. This witness, too, is the most timid, fluctuating, irresolute fellow I ever saw; I should tremble for his testimony against a sharp, bullying lawyer. And that, sir, is all at present we have to look to."

"I see, I see. It is dangerous, it is hazardous. But truth is truth; justice, justice! I will run the risk."

"Pardon me, if I ask did you ever know this brother.

Were you ever absolutely acquainted with him, — in the same house?"

"Many years since — years of early hardship and trial — I *was* acquainted with him, — what then?"

"I am sorry to hear it," and the lawyer looked grave. "Do you not see that if this witness is browbeat, is disbelieved, and if it can be shown that you, the claimant, was — forgive my saying it — intimate with a brother of such a character, why the whole thing might be made to look like perjury and conspiracy. If we stop here it is an ugly business!"

"And is this all you have to say to me? The witness is found, the only surviving witness, — the only proof I ever shall or ever can obtain, and you seek to terrify me — *me* too — from using the means for redress Providence itself vouchsafes me! Sir, I will not hear you!"

"Mr. Beaufort, you are impatient, — it is natural. But if we go to law, — that is, should I have anything to do with it, — wait, wait till your case is good. And hear me yet. This is *not* the only proof; this is not the only witness. You forget that there was an examined copy of the register; we may yet find that copy, and the person who copied it may yet be alive to attest it. Occupied with this thought, and weary of waiting the result of our advertisement, I resolved to go into the neighbourhood of Fernside; luckily, there was a gentleman's seat to be sold in the village. I made the survey of this place my apparent business. After going over the house, I appeared anxious to see how far some alterations could be made, — alterations to render it more like Lord Lilburne's villa. This led me to request a sight of that villa, — a crown to the housekeeper got me admittance. The housekeeper had lived with your father, and been retained by his lordship. I soon, therefore, knew which were the rooms the late Mr. Beaufort had principally occupied; shown into his study, where it was probable he would keep his papers, I inquired if it were the same furniture (which seemed likely enough from its age and fashion) as in your father's time. It was so; Lord Lilburne had bought the house just as it stood, and save a few additions in the drawing-room, the general equipment

of the villa remained unaltered. You look impatient! I'm coming to the point. My eye fell upon an old-fashioned bureau —

"But we searched every drawer in that bureau!"

"Any secret drawers?"

"Secret drawers! No, there were no secret drawers that I ever heard of!"

Mr. Barlow rubbed his hands and mused a moment.

"I was struck with that bureau, for *my* father had had one like it. It is not English, — it is of Dutch manufacture."

"Yes, I have heard that my father bought it at a sale, three or four years after his marriage."

"I learned this from the housekeeper, who was flattered by my admiring it. I could not find out from her at what sale it had been purchased, but it was in the neighbourhood she was sure. I had now a date to go upon; I learned, by careless inquiries, what sales near Fernside had taken place in a certain year. A gentleman had died at that date, whose furniture was sold by auction. With great difficulty, I found that his widow was still alive, living far up the country: I paid her a visit; and, not to fatigue you with too long an account, I have only to say that she not only assured me that she perfectly remembered the bureau, but that it had secret drawers and wells, very curiously contrived; nay, she showed me the very catalogue in which the said receptacles are noticed in capitals, to arrest the eye of the bidder, and increase the price of the bidding. That your father should never have revealed where he stowed this document is natural enough during the life of his uncle; his own life was not spared long enough to give him much opportunity to explain afterwards; but I feel perfectly persuaded in my own mind, that unless Mr. Robert Beaufort discovered that paper amongst the others he examined, in one of those drawers will be found all we want to substantiate your claims. This is the more likely from your father never mentioning, even to your mother apparently, the secret receptacles in the bureau. Why else such mystery? The probability is that he received the document either just before or at the time he purchased the bureau, or

that he bought it for that very purpose; and, having once deposited the paper in a place he deemed secure from curiosity, accident, carelessness, policy, perhaps, rather shame itself (pardon me) for the doubt of your mother's discretion that his secrecy seemed to imply, kept him from ever alluding to the circumstance, even when the intimacy of after-years made him more assured of your mother's self-sacrificing devotion to his interests. At his uncle's death he thought to repair all!"

"And how, if that be true, if that Heaven which has delivered me hitherto from so many dangers, has in the very secrecy of my poor father saved my birthright from the gripe of the usurper, — how, I say, is —"

"The bureau to pass into our possession? That is the difficulty. But we must contrive it somehow, if all else fail us; meanwhile, as I now feel sure that there has been a copy of that register made, I wish to know whether I should not immediately cross the country into Wales, and see if I can find any person in the neighbourhood of A—— who did examine the copy taken: for, mark you, the said copy is only of importance as leading us to the testimony of the actual witness who took it."

"Sir," said Vaudemont, heartily shaking Mr. Barlow by the hand, "forgive my first petulance. I see in you the very man I desired and wanted; your acuteness surprises and encourages me. Go to Wales, and God speed you!"

"Very well! in five minutes I shall be off. Meanwhile, see the witness yourself; the sight of his benefactor's son will do more to keep him steady than anything else. There's his address, and take care not to give him money. And now I will order my chaise, — the matter begins to look worth expense. Oh, I forgot to say that M. Liancourt called on me yesterday about his own affairs. He wishes much to consult you. I told him you would probably be this evening in town, and he said he would wait you at your lodging."

"Yes, I will lose not a moment in going to London, and visiting our witness. And he saw my mother at the altar! My poor mother — Ah, how could my father have doubted

her!" and as he spoke, he blushed for the first time with shame at that father's memory. He could not yet conceive that one so frank, one usually so bold and open, could for years have preserved from the woman who had sacrificed all to him a secret to her so important! *That* was, in fact, the only blot on his father's honour, — a foul and a grave blot it was. Heavily had the punishment fallen on those whom the father loved best! Alas, Philip had not yet learned what terrible corrupters are the Hope and the Fear of immense Wealth, — ay, even to men reputed the most honourable, if they have been reared and pampered in the belief that wealth is the Arch blessing of life! Rightly considered, in Philip Beaufort's solitary meanness lay the vast moral of this world's darkest truth!

Mr. Barlow was gone. Philip was about to enter his own chaise, when a dormeuse-and-four drove up to the inn-door to change horses. A young man was reclining, at his length, in the carriage, wrapped in cloaks, and with a ghastly paleness — the paleness of long and deep disease — upon his cheeks. He turned his dim eye with, perhaps, a glance of the sick man's envy on that strong and athletic form, majestic with health and vigour, as it stood beside the more humble vehicle. Philip did not, however, notice the new arrival; he sprang into the chaise, it rattled on; and thus, unconsciously, Arthur Beaufort and his cousin had again met. To which was now the Night, to which the Morning?

CHAPTER XII.

Bakam. — Let my men guard the walls.

Syana. — And mine the temple. — *The Island Princess.*

WHILE thus eventfully the days and the weeks had passed for Philip, no less eventfully, so far as the inner life is concerned, had they glided away for Fanny. She had feasted in quiet and delighted thought on the consciousness that she was

improving, that she was growing worthier of him, that *he* would perceive it on his return. Her manner was more thoughtful, more collected,—less childish, in short, than it had been. And yet, with all the stir and flutter of the aroused intellect, the charm of her strange innocence was not scared away. She rejoiced in the ancient liberty she had regained of going out and coming back when she pleased; and as the weather was too cold ever to tempt Simon from his fire-side, except perhaps for half an hour in the forenoon, so the hours of dusk, when he least missed her, were those which she chiefly appropriated for stealing away to the good schoolmistress, and growing wiser and wiser every day in the ways of God and the learning of His creatures. The schoolmistress was not a brilliant woman. Nor was it accomplishments of which Fanny stood in need, so much as the opening of her thoughts and mind by profitable books and rational conversation. Beautiful as were all her natural feelings, the schoolmistress had now little difficulty in educating feelings up to the dignity of principles.

At last, hitherto patient under the absence of one never absent from her heart, Fanny received from him the letter he had addressed to her two days before he quitted Beaufort Court, — another letter, a second letter, a letter to *excuse* himself for not coming before, a letter that gave her an address that asked for a reply. It was a morning of unequalled delight approaching to transport. And then the excitement of answering the letter, — the pride of showing how she was improved, what an excellent hand she now wrote! She shut herself up in her room; she did not go out that day. She placed the paper before her, and to her astonishment all that she had to say vanished from her mind at once. How was she even to begin? She had always hitherto called him “Brother.” Ever since her conversation with Sarah she felt that she could not call him that name again for the world, — no, never! But what *should* she call him, what *could* she call him? He signed himself “Philip.” She knew that was his name. She thought it a musical name to utter, but to *write* it! No! some instinct she could not account for seemed

to whisper that it was improper, presumptuous, to call him "Dear Philip." Had Burns's songs,—the songs that unthinkingly he had put into her hand, and told her to read, songs that comprise the most beautiful love-poems in the world,—had they helped to teach her some of the secrets of her own heart; and had timidity come with knowledge? Who shall say, who guess what passed within her? Nor did Fanny herself, perhaps, know her own feelings,—but write the words "*Dear Philip*" she could *not*. And the whole of that day, though she thought of nothing else, she could not even get through the first line to her satisfaction. The next morning she sat down again. It would be so unkind if she did not answer immediately; she must answer. She placed his letter before her; she resolutely began. But copy after copy was made and torn. And Simon wanted her, and Sarah wanted her, and there were bills to be paid; and dinner was over before her task was really begun. But after dinner she began in good earnest.

"How kind in you to write to me [the difficulty of any name was dispensed with by adopting none] and to wish to know about my dear grandfather! He is much the same, but hardly ever walks out now, and I have had a good deal of time to myself. I think something will surprise you and make you smile, as you used to do at first, when you come back. You must not be angry with me that I have gone out by myself very often,—every day, indeed. I have been so safe. Nobody has ever offered to be rude again to Fanny [the word '*Fanny*' was here carefully scratched out with a penknife, and *me* substituted]. But you shall know all when you come. And are you sure *you* are well,—quite, quite well? Do you never have the headaches you complained of sometimes? Do say this! Do you walk out every day? Is there any pretty churchyard near you now? Whom do you walk with?

"I have been so happy in putting the flowers on the two graves, but I still give yours the prettiest, though the other is so dear to me. I feel sad when I come to the last, but not when I look at the one I have looked at so long. Oh, how good you were! But you don't like me to thank you."

"This is very stupid!" cried Fanny, suddenly throwing down her pen; "and I don't think I am improved at all;"

and she half cried with vexation. Suddenly a bright idea crossed her. In the little parlour where the schoolmistress privately received her, she had seen among the books, and thought at the time how useful it might be to her if ever she had to write to Philip, a little volume entitled "The Complete Letter Writer." She knew by the title-page that it contained models for every description of letter; no doubt it would contain the precise thing that would suit the present occasion. She started up at the notion. She would go,—she could be back to finish the letter before post-time. She put on her bonnet, left the letter, in her haste, open on the table, and just looking into the parlour in her way to the street-door, to convince herself that Simon was asleep, and the wire-guard was on the fire, she hurried to the kind school-mistress.

One of the fogs that in autumn gather sullenly over London and its suburbs covered the declining day with premature dimness. It grew darker and darker as she proceeded, but she reached the house in safety. She spent a quarter of an hour in timidly consulting her friend about all kinds of letters except the identical one that she intended to write; and having had it strongly impressed on her mind that if the letter was to a gentleman at all genteel, she ought to begin "Dear Sir," and end with "I have the honour to remain," and that he would be everlastingly offended if she did not in the address affix "Esquire" to his name (*that* was a great discovery),—she carried off the precious volume, and quitted the house. There was a wall that, bounding the demesnes of the school, ran for some short distance into the main street. The increasing fog here faintly struggled against the glimmer of a single lamp at some little distance. Just in this spot, her eye was caught by a dark object in the road, which she could scarcely perceive to be a carriage, when her hand was seized, and a voice said in her ear, —

"Ah, you will not be so cruel to me, I hope, as you were to my messenger! I have come myself for you."

She turned in great alarm, but the darkness prevented her recognizing the face of him who thus accosted her.

"Let me go!" she cried,— "let me go!"

"Hush! hush! No, no! Come with me. You shall have a house, carriage, servants! You shall wear silk gowns and jewels! You shall be a great lady!"

As these various temptations succeeded in rapid course each new struggle of Fanny, a voice from the coach-box said, in a low tone,—

"Take care, my lord, I see somebody coming,—perhaps a policeman!"

Fanny heard the caution, and screamed for rescue.

"Is it so?" muttered the molester. And suddenly Fanny felt her voice checked, her head mantled, her light form lifted from the ground. She clung, she struggled; it was in vain. It was the affair of a moment; she felt herself borne into the carriage, the door closed; the stranger was by her side, and his voice said,—

"Drive on, Dykeman. Fast! fast!"

Two or three minutes, which seemed to her terror as ages, elapsed, when the gag and the mantle were gently removed, and the same voice (she still could not see her companion) said in a very mild tone,—

"Do not alarm yourself; there is no cause,—indeed there is not. I would not have adopted this plan had there been any other, any gentler one. But I could not call at your own house; I knew no other where to meet you. This was the only course left to me,—indeed it was. I made myself acquainted with your movements. Do not blame me, then, for urying into your footsteps. I watched for you all last night; you did not come out. I was in despair. At last I find you. Do not be so terrified; I will not even touch your hand if you do not wish it."

As he spoke, however, he attempted to touch it, and was repulsed with an energy that rather disconcerted him. The poor girl recoiled from him into the farthest corner of that prison in speechless horror, in the darkest confusion of ideas. She did not weep, she did not sob; but her trembling seemed to shake the very carriage. The man continued to address, to expostulate, to pray, to soothe. His manner was respectful; his protestations that he would not harm her for the world were endless.

"Only just see the home I can give you,— for two days, for one day; only just hear how rich I can make you and your grandfather, and *then*, if you wish to leave me, you shall."

More, much more, to this effect, did he continue to pour forth, without extracting any sound from Fanny but gasps as for breath, and now and then a low murmur,—

"Let me go, let me go! My grandfather, my blind grandfather!"

And finally tears came to her relief, and she sobbed with a passion that alarmed and perhaps even touched her companion, cynical and icy as he was. Meanwhile the carriage seemed to fly. Fast as two horses thorough-bred and almost at full speed could go, they were whirled along, till about an hour, or even less, from the time in which she had been thus captured, the carriage stopped.

"Are we here already?" said the man, putting his head out of the window. "Do then as I told you. Not to the front door; to my study."

In two minutes more the carriage halted again, before a building which looked white and ghostlike through the mist. The driver dismounted, opened with a latch-key a window-door, entered for a moment to light the candles in a solitary room from a fire that blazed on the hearth, reappeared, and opened the carriage-door. It was with a difficulty for which they were scarcely prepared that they were enabled to get Fanny from the carriage. No soft words, no whispered prayers could draw her forth; and it was with no trifling address, for her companion sought to be as gentle as the force necessary to employ would allow, that he disengaged her hands from the window-frame, the lining, the cushions, to which they clung, and at last bore her into the house. The driver closed the window again as he retreated, and they were alone. Fanny then cast a wild, scarce conscious glance over the apartment. It was small and simply furnished. Opposite to her was an old-fashioned bureau,—one of those quaint, elaborate monuments of Dutch ingenuity, which during the present century the audacious spirit of curiosity-vendors has transplanted from their native receptacles, to contrast, with gro-

tesque strangeness, the neat handiwork of Gillow and Seddon. It had a physiognomy and character of its own, — this fantastic foreigner, — inlaid with mosaics, depicting landscapes and animals; graceless in form and fashion, but still picturesque, and winning admiration, when more closely observed, from the patient defiance of all rules of taste which had formed its cumbrous parts into one profusely ornamented and eccentric whole. It was the more noticeable from its total want of harmony with the other appurtenances of the room, which bespoke the tastes of the plain English squire. Prints of horses and hunts, fishing-rods and fowling-pieces, carefully suspended, decorated the walls. Not, however, on this notable stranger from the sluggish land rested the eye of Fanny. *That*, in her hurried survey, was arrested only by a portrait placed over the bureau, — the portrait of a female in the bloom of life; a face so fair, a brow so candid, an eye so pure, a lip so rich in youth and joy, that as her look lingered on the features Fanny felt comforted, felt as if some living protectress were there. The fire burned bright and merrily; a table, spread as for dinner, was drawn near it. To any other eye but Fanny's the place would have seemed a picture of English comfort. At last her looks rested on her companion. He had thrown himself, with a long sigh, partly of fatigue, partly of satisfaction, on one of the chairs, and was contemplating her as she thus stood and gazed, with an expression of mingled curiosity and admiration; she recognized at once her first, her only persecutor. She recoiled, and covered her face with her hands. The man approached her: —

“Do not hate me, Fanny, — do not turn away. Believe me, though I have acted thus violently, here all violence will cease. I love you, but I will not be satisfied till you love me in return. I am not young; and I am not handsome; but I am rich and great, and I can make those whom I love happy, — so happy, Fanny!”

But Fanny had turned away, and was now busily employed in trying to re-open the door at which she had entered. Failing in this, she suddenly darted away, opened the inner door, and rushed into the passage with a loud cry. Her persecutor

stified an oath, and sprung after and arrested her. He now spoke sternly, and with a smile and a frown at once,—

“This is folly! Come back, or you will repent it! I have promised you, as a gentleman,—as a nobleman, if you know what that is,—to respect you; but neither will I myself be trifled with nor insulted. There must be no screams!”

His look and his voice awed Fanny in spite of her bewilderment and her loathing, and she suffered herself passively to be drawn into the room. He closed and bolted the door. She threw herself on the ground in one corner, and moaned low but piteously. He looked at her musingly for some moments, as he stood by the fire, and at last went to the door, opened it, and called “Harriet” in a low voice. Presently a young woman of about thirty appeared, neatly but plainly dressed, and of a countenance that, if not very winning, might certainly be called very handsome. He drew her aside for a few moments, and a whispered conference was exchanged. He then walked gravely up to Fanny.

“My young friend,” said he, “I see my presence is too much for you this evening. This young woman will attend you,—will get you all you want. She can tell you, too, that I am not the terrible sort of person you seem to suppose. I shall see you to-morrow.” So saying, he turned on his heel and walked out.

Fanny felt something like liberty, something like joy, again. She rose, and looked so pleadingly, so earnestly, so intently into the woman’s face, that Harriet turned away her bold eyes abashed; and at this moment Dykeman himself looked into the room.

“You are to bring us in dinner here yourself, uncle; and then go to my lord in the drawing-room.”

Dykeman looked pleased, and vanished. Then Harriet came up and took Fanny’s hand, and said kindly,—

“Don’t be frightened. I assure you, half the girls in London would give I don’t know what to be in your place. My lord never will force you to do anything you don’t like,—it’s not his way; and he’s the kindest and best man,—and so rich; he does not know what to do with his money!”

To all this Fanny made but one answer; she threw herself suddenly upon the woman's breast, and sobbed out,—

"My grandfather is blind, he cannot do without me; he will die,—die! Have you nobody you love, too? Let me go, let me out! What can they want with me? I never did harm to any one."

"And no one will harm *you*,—I swear it!" said Harriet, earnestly. "I see you don't know my lord. But here's the dinner; come and take a bit of something, and a glass of wine."

Fanny could not touch anything except a glass of water, and that nearly choked her. But at last, as she recovered her senses, the absence of her tormentor, the presence of a *woman*, the solemn assurances of Harriet that if she did not like to stay there, after a day or two she should go back, tranquillized her in some measure. She did not heed the artful and lengthened eulogiums that the she-tempter then proceeded to pour forth upon the virtues and the love and the generosity, and above all the money, of my lord. She only kept repeating to herself, "I shall go back in a day or two." At length, Harriet, having eaten and drunk as much as she could by her single self, and growing wearied with efforts from which so little resulted, proposed to Fanny to retire to rest. She opened a door to the right of the fireplace, and lighted her up a winding staircase to a pretty and comfortable chamber, where she offered to help her to undress. Fanny's complete innocence, and her utter ignorance of the precise nature of the danger that awaited her, though she fancied it must be very great and very awful, prevented her quite comprehending all that Harriet meant to convey by her solemn assurances that she should not be disturbed. But she understood, at least, that she was not to see her hateful jailer till the next morning; and when Harriet, wishing her "good night," showed her a bolt to her door, she was less terrified at the thought of being alone in that strange place. She listened till Harriet's footsteps had died away, and then, with a beating heart, tried to open the door; it was locked from without. She sighed heavily. The window? Alas! when she had removed the shutter,

there was another one barred from without, which precluded all hope there; she had no help for it but to bolt her door, stand forlorn and amazed at her own condition, and, at last, falling on her knees, to pray, in her own simple fashion, which since her recent visits to the schoolmistress had become more intelligent and earnest, to Him from whom no bolts and no bars can exclude the voice of the human heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN te omnis domus inclinata recumbit.¹ — VIRGIL.

LORD LILBURNE, seated before a tray in the drawing-room, was finishing his own solitary dinner, and Dykeman was standing close behind him, nervous and agitated. The confidence of many years between the master and the servant, the peculiar mind of Lilburne, which excluded him from all friendship with his own equals, had established between the two the kind of intimacy so common with the noble and the valet of the old French *régime*; and indeed in much Lilburne more resembled the men of that day and land than he did the nobler and statelier being which belongs to our own. But to the end of time, whatever is at once vicious, polished, and intellectual will have a common likeness.

"But, my lord," said Dykeman, "just reflect. This girl is so well known in the place, she will be sure to be missed; and if any violence is done to her, it's a capital crime, my lord,—a capital crime. I know they can't hang a great lord like you, but all concerned in it may —"

Lord Lilburne interrupted the speaker by — "Give me some wine and hold your tongue!" Then, when he had emptied his glass, he drew himself nearer to the fire, warmed his hands, mused a moment, and turned round to his confidant,—

¹ "On thee the whole house rests confidingly."

"Dykeman," said he, "though you're an ass and a coward, and you don't deserve that I should be so condescending, I will relieve your fears at once. I know the law better than you can, for my whole life has been spent in doing exactly as I please, without ever putting myself in the power of LAW, which interferes with the pleasures of other men. You are right in saying violence would be a capital crime. Now the difference between vice and crime is this: Vice is what parsons write sermons against,—Crime is what we make laws against. I never committed a crime in all my life,—at an age between fifty and sixty I am not going to begin. Vices are safe things; I may have my vices like other men: but crimes are dangerous things, illegal things, things to be carefully avoided. Look you" (and here the speaker, fixing his puzzled listener with his eye, broke into a grin of sublime mockery), "let me suppose you to be the World,—that cringing valet of valets, the WORLD! I should say to you this: 'My dear World, you and I understand each other well,—we are made for each other, — I never come in your way, nor you in mine. If I get drunk every day in my own room, that's vice, you can't touch me; if I take an extra glass for the first time in my life, and knock down the watchman, that's a crime, which, if I am rich, costs me one pound,—perhaps five pounds, — if I am poor, sends me to the treadmill. If I break the hearts of five hundred old fathers by buying with gold or flattery the embraces of five hundred young daughters, that's vice,—your servant, Mr. World! If one termagant wench scratches my face, makes a noise, and goes brazen-faced to the Old Bailey to swear to her shame, why that's crime, and my friend, Mr. World, pulls a hemp-rope out of his pocket.' Now, do you understand? Yes, I repeat," he added, with a change of voice, "I never committed a crime in my life; I have never even been accused of one, — never had an action of *crim. con.*, of seduction against me. I know how to manage such matters better. I was forced to carry off this girl, because I had no other means of courting her. To court her is all I mean to do now. I am perfectly aware that an action for violence, as you call it, would be the

more disagreeable because of the very weakness of intellect which the girl is said to possess, and of which report I don't believe a word. I shall most certainly avoid every the remotest appearance that could be so construed. It is for that reason that no one in the house shall attend the girl except yourself and your niece. Your niece I can depend on, I know; I have been kind to her; I have got her a good husband; I shall get her husband a good place; I shall be godfather to her first child. To be sure, the other servants will know there's a lady in the house, but to that they are accustomed; I don't set up for a Joseph. They need know no more, unless you choose to blab it out. Well, then, supposing that at the end of a few days, more or less, without any rudeness on my part, a young woman, after seeing a few jewels and fine dresses and a pretty house, and being made very comfortable, and being convinced that her grandfather shall be taken care of without her slaving herself to death, chooses of her own accord to live with me, where's the crime, and who can interfere with it?"

"Certainly, my lord, that alters the case," said Dykeman, considerably relieved. "But still," he added anxiously, "if the inquiry is made, if before all this is settled, it is found out where she is?"

"Why, then no harm will be done, no violence will be committed. Her grandfather—drivelling and a miser, you say—can be appeased by a little money, and it will be nobody's business, and no case can be made of it. Tush, man! I always look before I leap! People in this world are not so charitable as you suppose. What more natural than that a poor and pretty girl—not as wise as Queen Elizabeth—should be tempted to pay a visit to a rich lover! All they can say of the lover is that he is a very gay man or a very bad man, and that's saying nothing new of me. But don't think it *will* be found out. Just get me that stool; this has been a very troublesome piece of business,—rather tired me. I am not so young as I was. Yes, Dykeman, something which that Frenchman Vaudemont, or Vaut-rien, or whatever his name is, said to me once has a certain degree of truth. I felt

it in the last fit of the gout, when my pretty niece was smoothing my pillows. A nurse, as we grow older, may be of use to one. I wish to make this girl like me, or be grateful to me. I am meditating a longer and more serious attachment than usual,—a companion!”

“A companion, my lord, in that poor creature! so ignorant, so uneducated!”

“So much the better. This world palls upon me,” said Lilburne, almost gloomily. “I grow sick of the miserable quackeries, of the piteous conceits that men, women, and children call ‘knowledge.’ I wish to catch a glimpse of nature before I die. This creature interests me, and that is something in this life. Clear those things away, and leave me.”

“Ay!” muttered Lilburne, as he bent over the fire alone, “when I first heard that that girl was the granddaughter of Simon Gawtrey, and, therefore, the child of the man whom I am to thank that I am a cripple, I felt as if love to her were a part of that hate which I owe to him,—a segment in the circle of my vengeance. But *now*, poor child! I forget all this. I feel for her not passion, but what I never felt before, *affection*. I feel that if I had such a child, I could understand what men mean when they talk of the tenderness of a father. I have not one impure thought for that girl,—not one; but I would give thousands if she could love me. Strange! strange! in all this I do not recognize myself!”

Lord Lilburne retired to rest betimes that night; he slept sound; rose refreshed at an earlier hour than usual; and what he considered a fit of vapours of the previous night was passed away. He looked with eagerness to an interview with Fanny. Proud of his intellect, pleased in any of those sinister exercises of it which the code and habits of his life so long permitted to him, he regarded the conquest of his fair adversary with the interest of a scientific game. Harriet went to Fanny’s room to prepare her to receive her host; and Lord Lilburne now resolved to make his own visit the less unwelcome by reserving for his especial gift some showy, if not valuable, trinkets, which for similar purposes never failed

the depositories of the villa he had purchased for his pleasures. He recollected that these gewgaws were placed in the bureau in the study,—in which, as having a lock of foreign and intricate workmanship, he usually kept whatever might tempt cupidity in those frequent absences when the house was left guarded but by two women servants. Finding that Fanny had not yet quitted her own chamber, while Harriet went up to attend and reason with her, he himself limped into the study below, unlocked the bureau, and was searching in the drawers, when he heard the voice of Fanny above, raised a little as if in remonstrance or entreaty; and he paused to listen. He could not, however, distinguish what was said; and in the meanwhile, without attending much to what he was about, his hands were still employed in opening and shutting the drawers, passing through the pigeon-holes, and feeling for a topaz brooch, which he thought could not fail of pleasing the unsophisticated eyes of Fanny. One of the recesses was deeper than the rest; he fancied the brooch was there; he stretched his hand into the recess; and as the room was partially darkened by the lower shutters from without, which were still unclosed to prevent any attempted escape of his captive, he had only the sense of touch to depend on. Not finding the brooch, he stretched on till he came to the extremity of the recess, and was suddenly sensible of a sharp pain; the flesh seemed caught as in a trap. He drew back his finger with sudden force and a half-suppressed exclamation, and he perceived the bottom or floor of the pigeon-hole recede, as if sliding back. His curiosity was aroused; he again felt warily and cautiously, and discovered a very slight inequality and roughness at the extremity of the recess. He was aware instantly that there was some secret spring; he pressed with some force on the spot, and he felt the board give way; he pushed it back towards him, and it slid suddenly with a whirring noise, and left a cavity below exposed to his sight. He peered in, and drew forth a paper; he opened it at first carelessly, for he was still trying to listen to Fanny. His eye ran rapidly over a few preliminary lines till it rested on what follows:—

Marriage. The year 18 —

No. 83, page 21.

Philip Beaufort, of this parish of A——, and Catherine Morton, of the parish of St. Botolph, Aldgate, London, were married in this church by banns, this 12th day of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and——,¹ by me,

CALEB PRICE, *Vicar.*

This marriage was solemnized between us,

PHILIP BEAUFORT.

CATHERINE MORTON.

In the presence of

DAVID APREECE.

WILLIAM SMITH.

The above is a true copy taken from the registry of marriages, in A—— parish, this 19th day of March, 18 —, by me,

MORGAN JONES, *Curate of C——.*

Lord Lilburne again cast his eye over the lines prefixed to this startling document, which, being those written at Caleb's desire, by Mr. Jones to Philip Beaufort, we need not here transcribe to the reader.² At that instant Harriet descended the stairs, and came into the room; she crept up on tiptoe to Lilburne, and whispered,—

“She is coming down, I think; she does not know you are here.”

“Very well,—go!” said Lord Lilburne. And scarce had Harriet left the room, when a carriage drove furiously to the door, and Robert Beaufort rushed into the study.

¹ This is according to the form customary at the date at which the copy was made. There has since been an alteration.

² See page 14.

CHAPTER XIV.

GONE, and none know it.

How now ? — What news, what hopes and steps discovered !

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Pilgrim*.

WHEN Philip arrived at his lodgings in town it was very late, but he still found Liancourt waiting the chance of his arrival. The Frenchman was full of his own schemes and projects. He was a man of high repute and connections; negotiations for his recall to Paris had been entered into; he was divided between a Quixotic loyalty and a rational prudence; he brought his doubts to Vaudemont. Occupied as he was with thoughts of so important and personal a nature, Philip could yet listen patiently to his friend, and weigh with him the *pros* and *cons*; and after having mutually agreed that loyalty and prudence would both be best consulted by waiting a little, to see if the nation, as the Carlists yet fondly trusted, would soon, after its first fever, offer once more the throne and the purple to the descendant of Saint Louis, Liancourt, as he lighted his cigar to walk home, said: "A thousand thanks to you, my dear friend; and how have you enjoyed yourself in your visit? I am not surprised or jealous that Lilburne did not invite me, as I do not play at cards, and as I have said some sharp things to him."

"I fancy I shall have the same disqualifications for another invitation," said Vaudemont, with a severe smile. "I may have much to disclose to you in a few days. At present my news is still unripe. And have you seen anything of Lilburne? He left us some days since. Is he in London?"

"Yes; I was riding with our friend Henri, who wished to try a new horse off the stones, a little way into the country yesterday. We went through — and H—. Pretty places, those. Do you know them?"

"Yes; I know H——."

"And just at dusk, as we were spurring back to town, whom should I see walking on the path of the high-road but Lord Lilburne himself! I could hardly believe my eyes. I stopped, and after asking him about you, I could not help expressing my surprise to see him on foot at such a place. You know the man's sneer. 'A Frenchman so gallant as Monsieur de Liancourt,' said he, 'need not be surprised at much greater miracles; the iron moves to the magnet. I have a little adventure here; pardon me if I ask you to ride on.' Of course I wished him good day; and a little farther up the road I saw a dark plain chariot, no coronet, no arms, no foot-man, — only the man on the box; but the beauty of the horses assured me it must belong to Lilburne. Can you conceive such absurdity in a man of that age, — and a very clever fellow too? Yet how is it that one does not ridicule it in Lilburne, as one would in another man between fifty and sixty?"

"Because one does not ridicule — one loathes — him."

"No; that's not it. The fact is that one can't fancy Lilburne old. His manner is young, his eye is young. I never saw any one with so much vitality. 'The bad heart and the good digestion,' — the twin secrets for wearing well, eh?"

"Where did you meet him, — not near H——?"

"Yes; close by. Why? Have *you* any adventure there too? Nay, forgive me; it was but a jest. Good night!"

Vaudemont fell into an uneasy revery. He could not divine exactly why he should be alarmed, but he *was* alarmed, at Lilburne being in the neighbourhood of H——. It was the foot of the profane violating the sanctuary. An undefined thrill shot through him, as his mind coupled together the associations of Lilburne and Fanny; but there was no ground for forebodings. Fanny did not stir out alone. An adventure, too — pooh! Lord Lilburne must be awaiting a willing and voluntary appointment, most probably from some one of the fair but decorous frailties in London. Lord Lilburne's more recent conquests were said to be among those of his own rank; subarbs are useful for such assignations. Any other thought was too horrible to be contemplated. He glanced to the clock;

it was three in the morning. He would go to H—— early, even before he sought out Mr. William Smith. With that resolution, and even his hardy frame worn out by the excitement of the day, he threw himself on his bed and fell asleep.

He did not wake till near nine, and had just dressed, and hurried over his abstemious breakfast, when the servant of the house came to tell him that an old woman, apparently in great agitation, wished to see him. His head was still full of witnesses and lawsuits; and he was vaguely expecting some visitor connected with his primary objects, when Sarah broke into the room. She cast a hurried, suspicious look round her, and then, throwing herself on her knees to him, "Oh!" she cried, "if you have taken that poor young thing away, God forgive you! Let her come back again. It shall be all hushed up. Don't ruin her! don't, that's a dear good gentleman!"

"Speak plainly, woman, — what do you mean?" cried Philip, turning pale.

A very few words sufficed for an explanation: Fanny's disappearance the previous night; the alarm of Sarah at her non-return; the apathy of old Simon, who did not comprehend what had happened, and quietly went to bed; the search Sarah had made during half the night; the intelligence she had picked up that the policeman, going his rounds, had heard a female shriek near the school, but that all he could perceive through the mist was a carriage driving rapidly past him; Sarah's suspicions of Vaudemont confirmed in the morning, when, entering Fanny's room, she perceived the poor girl's unfinished letter with his own; the clew to his address that the letter gave her, — all this, ere she well understood what she herself was talking about, Vaudemont's alarm seized, and the reflection of a moment construed. The carriage, Lilburne seen lurking in the neighbourhood the previous day, the former attempt, — all flashed on him with an intolerable glare. While Sarah was yet speaking, he rushed from the house, he flew to Lord Lilburne's in Park Lane, he composed his manner, he inquired calmly. His lordship had slept from home; he was, they believed, at Fernside. Fernside! H—— was on the direct way to that villa. Scarcely ten minutes had

elapsed since he heard the story ere he was on the road, with such speed as the promise of a guinea a mile could extract from the spurs of a young postboy applied to the flanks of London posthorses.

CHAPTER XV.

*Ex humili magna ad fastigia rerum
Extollit.*¹ — JUVENAL.

WHEN Harriet had quitted Fanny, the waiting-woman, craftily wishing to lure her into Lilburne's presence, had told her that the room below was empty; and the captive's mind naturally and instantly seized on the thought of escape. After a brief breathing-pause, she crept noiselessly down the stairs, and gently opened the door; and at the very instant she did so, Robert Beaufort entered from the other door. She drew back in terror, when what was her astonishment in hearing a name uttered that spell-bound her, — the last name she could have expected to hear; for Lilburne, the instant he saw Beaufort — pale, haggard, agitated — rush into the room, and bang the door after him, could only suppose that something of extraordinary moment had occurred with regard to the dreaded guest, and cried: "You come about Vaudemont! Something has happened about Vaudemont! about Philip! What is it? Calm yourself."

Fanny, as the name was thus abruptly uttered, actually thrust her face through the door; but she again drew back, and, all her senses preternaturally quickened at that name, while she held the door almost closed, listened with her whole soul in her ears.

The faces of both the men were turned from her, and her partial entry had not been perceived.

"Yes," said Robert Beaufort, leaning his weight, as if

¹ "Fortune raises men from low estate to the very summit of prosperity."

ready to sink to the ground, upon Lilburne's shoulder, — "yes; Vaudemont, or Philip, for they *are* one, — yes, it *is* about that man I have come to consult you. Arthur has arrived."

"Well?"

"And Arthur has seen the wretch who visited us, and the rascal's manner has so imposed on him, so convinced him that Philip is the heir to all our property, that he has come over — ill, ill — I fear" (added Beaufort, in a hollow voice), "*dying*, to — to —"

"To guard against their machinations?"

"No, no, no! to say that if such be the case, neither honour nor conscience will allow us to resist his rights. He is so obstinate in this matter, his nerves so ill bear reasoning and contradiction, that I know not what to do —"

"Take breath, — go on."

"Well, it seems that this man found out Arthur almost as soon as my son arrived at Paris; that he has persuaded Arthur that he has it in his power to prove the marriage; that he pretended to be very impatient for a decision; that Arthur, in order to gain time to see me, affected irresolution, took him to Boulogne, for the rascal does not dare to return to England, left him there; and now comes back my own son, as my worst enemy, to conspire against me for my property! I could not have kept my temper if I had stayed. But that's not all, — that's not the worst; Vaudemont left me suddenly in the morning on the receipt of a letter. In taking leave of Camilla he let fall hints which fill me with fear. Well, I inquired his movements as I came along; he had stopped at D——, had been closeted for above an hour with a man whose name the landlord of the inn knew, for it was on his carpet-bag, — the name was *Barlow*. You remember the advertisements! Good heavens! what is to be done? I would not do anything unhandsome or dishonest. But there never was a marriage. I never will believe there was a marriage, — never!"

"There *was* a marriage, Robert Beaufort," said Lord Lilburne, almost enjoying the torture he was about to inflict; "and I hold here a paper that Philip Vaudemont — for so we

will yet call him — would give his right hand to clutch for a moment. I have but just found it in a secret cavity in that bureau. Robert, on this paper may depend the fate, the fortune, the prosperity, the greatness of Philip Vaudemont, — or his poverty, his exile, his ruin. See!"

Robert Beaufort glanced over the paper held out to him, dropped it on the floor, and staggered to a seat. Lilburne coolly replaced the document in the bureau, and limping to his brother-in-law, said with a smile, —

"But the paper is in my possession. I will not destroy it. No; I have no right to destroy it. Besides, it would be a crime; but *if I give it to you, you* can do with it as you please."

"O Lilburne, spare me, spare me! I meant to be an honest man I—I—" And Robert Beaufort sobbed.

Lilburne looked at him in scornful surprise.

"Do not fear that *I* shall ever think worse of you; and who else will know it? Do not fear *me*. No; I, too, have reasons to hate and to fear this Philip Vaudemont, — for Vaudemont shall be his name, and not Beaufort, in spite of fifty such scraps of paper! He has known a man, — my worst foe; he has secrets of mine, of my past, perhaps of my present: but I laugh at his knowledge while he is a wandering adventurer, — I should tremble at that knowledge if he could thunder it out to the world as Philip Beaufort of Beaufort Court! There, I am candid with you. Now hear my plan. Prove to Arthur that his visitor is a convicted felon by sending the officers of justice after him instantly, — off with him again to the Settlements; defy a single witness; entrap Vaudemont back to France, and prove him (I think I will prove him such — I think so — with a little money and a little pains) — prove him the accomplice of William Gawtreys, a coiner and a murderer! Pshaw! take yon paper. Do with it as you will: keep it, give it to Arthur, let Philip Vaudemont have it, and Philip Vaudemont will be rich and great, the happiest man between earth and paradise! on the other hand, come and tell me that you have lost it or that I never gave you such a paper or that no such paper ever existed, and Philip Vaudemont may live a

pauper, and die, perhaps, a slave at the galleys! Lose it, I say, — *lose it*, — and advise with me upon the rest.”

Horror-struck, bewildered, the weak man gazed upon the calm face of the Master-villain, as the scholar of the old fables might have gazed on the fiend who put before him worldly prosperity here and the loss of his soul hereafter. He had never hitherto, regarded Lilburne in his true light. He was appalled by the black heart that lay bare before him.

“I can’t destroy it, — I can’t,” he faltered out; “and *if* I did out of love for Arthur, — don’t talk of galleys, of vengeance — I — I —”

“The arrears of the rents you have enjoyed will send you to jail for your life. No, no; *don’t* destroy the paper.”

Beaufort rose with a desperate effort; he moved to the bureau. Fanny’s heart was on her lips. Of this long conference she had understood only the one broad point on which Lilburne had insisted with an emphasis that could have enlightened an infant, — and he looked on Beaufort as an infant then, — *On that paper rested Philip Vaudemont’s fate, — happiness if saved, ruin if destroyed; Philip, her Philip!* And Philip himself had said to her once — when had she ever forgotten his words? and now how those words flashed across her, — Philip himself had said to her once, “Upon a scrap of paper, if I could but find it, may depend my whole fortune, my whole happiness, all that I care for in life.” Robert Beaufort moved to the bureau, he seized the document, he looked over it again, hurriedly, and ere Lilburne, who by no means wished to have it destroyed in *his own* presence, was aware of his intention, he hastened with tottering steps to the hearth, averted his eyes, and cast it on the fire. At that instant something white — he scarce knew what, it seemed to him as a spirit, as a ghost — darted by him, and snatched the paper, as yet uninjured, from the embers! There was a pause for the hundredth part of a moment. A gurgling sound of astonishment and horror from Beaufort, an exclamation from Lilburne, a laugh from Fanny, as, her eyes flashing light, with a proud dilation of stature, with the paper clasped tightly to her bosom, she turned her looks of triumph from

one to the other. The two men were both too amazed, at the instant, for rapid measures. But Lilburne, recovering himself first, hastened to her; she eluded his grasp, she made towards the door to the passage; when Lilburne, seriously alarmed, seized her arm, —

“Foolish child! give me that paper!”

“Never but with my life!” And Fanny’s cry for help rang through the house.

“Then —” the speech died on his lips, for at that instant a rapid stride was heard without, a momentary scuffle, voices in altercation; the door gave way as if a battering ram had forced it; not so much thrown forward as actually hurled into the room, the body of Dykeman fell heavily, like a dead man’s, at the very feet of Lord Lilburne — and Philip Vaudemont stood in the doorway!

The grasp of Lilburne on Fanny’s arm relaxed, and the girl, with one bound, sprung to Philip’s breast. “Here, here!” she cried, “take it, take it!” and she thrust the paper into his hand. “Don’t let them have it, read it, see it, — never mind *me!*” But Philip, though his hand unconsciously closed on the precious document, did mind Fanny; and in that moment her cause was the only one in the world to him.

“Foul villain!” he said, as he strode to Lilburne, while Fanny still clung to his breast, “speak! speak! — is — she — is she? — man, man, speak! — you know what I would say! She is the child of your own daughter, the grandchild of that Mary whom you dishonoured, the child of the woman whom William Gawtreys saved from pollution! Before he died, Gawtreys commended her to my care! O God of Heaven! — speak! — I am *not* too late!”

The manner, the words, the face of Philip left Lilburne terror-stricken with conviction. But the man’s crafty ability, debased as it was, triumphed even over remorse for the dread guilt meditated, — over gratitude for the dread guilt spared. He glanced at Beaufort; at Dykeman, who now, slowly recovering, gazed at him with eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; and lastly fixed his look on Philip himself. There

were three witnesses, — presence of mind was his great attribute.

“And if, Monsieur de Vaudemont, I knew, or, at least, had the firmest persuasion that Fanny *was* my grandchild, what then? Why else should she be here? Pooh, sir! I am an old man.”

Philip recoiled a step in wonder; his plain sense was baffled by the calm lie. He looked down at Fanny, who, comprehending nothing of what was spoken, for all her faculties, even her very sense of sight and hearing, were absorbed in her impatient anxiety for him, cried out, —

“No harm has come to Fanny, — none; only frightened. Read! read! Save that paper! You know what you once said about a mere scrap of paper! Come away! come!”

He did now cast his eyes on the paper he held. That was an awful moment for Robert Beaufort, — even for Lilburne! To snatch the fatal document from *that* gripe! They would as soon have snatched it from a tiger! He lifted his eyes; they rested on his mother’s picture! Her lips smiled on him! He turned to Beaufort in a state of emotion too exulting, too blest for vulgar vengeance, for vulgar triumph, — almost for words.

“Look yonder, Robert Beaufort, — look!” and he pointed to the picture. “*Her* name is spotless! I stand again beneath a roof that was my father’s, — the Heir of Beaufort! We shall meet before the justice of our country. For you, Lord Lilburne, I will believe you; it is too horrible to doubt even your intentions. If wrong had chanced to her, I would have rent you where you stand, limb from limb. And thank *her*” — for Lilburne recovered at this language the daring of his youth before calculation, indolence, and excess had dulled the edge of his nerves; and unawed by the height and manhood and strength of his menacer, stalked haughtily up to him — “and thank your relationship to her,” said Philip, sinking his voice into a whisper, “that I do not brand you as a pilferer and a cheat! Hush, knave! hush, pupil of George Gawtre! there are no duels for me but with men of honour!”

Lilburne *now* turned white, and the big word stuck in his

throat. In another instant Fanny and her guardian had quitted the house.

"Dykeman," said Lord Lilburne after a long silence, "I shall ask you another time how you came to admit that impertinent person. At present, go and order breakfast for Mr. Beaufort."

As soon as Dykeman, more astounded, perhaps, by his lord's coolness than even by the preceding circumstances, had left the study, Lilburne came up to Beaufort, — who seemed absolutely stricken as if by palsy, — and touching him impatiently and rudely, said, —

"'S death, man! rouse yourself! There is not a moment to be lost! I have already decided on what you are to do. This paper is not worth a rush, unless the curate who examined it will depose to that fact. He *is* a curate, — a Welsh curate; you are yet Mr. Beaufort, a rich and a great man. The curate, properly managed, *may* depose to the contrary; and then we will indict them all for forgery and conspiracy. At the worst, you can, no doubt, get the parson to *forget* all about it, — to stay away. His address was on the certificate, — C——. Go yourself into Wales without an instant's delay. Then, having arranged with Mr. Jones, hurry back, cross to Boulogne, and buy this convict and his witness, — yes, *buy* them! *That*, now, is the only thing. Quick! quick! quick! Zounds, man! if it were *my* affair, *my* estate, I would not care a pin for that fragment of paper; I should rather rejoice at it. I see how it could be turned against them! Go!"

"No, no; I am not equal to it! Will *you* manage it, — will *you*? Half my estate! all! Take it: but save —"

"Tut!" interrupted Lord Lilburne, in great disdain. "I am as rich as I want to be. *Money* does not bribe *me*. I manage this! *I!* Lord Lilburne. *I!* Why, if found out, it is subornation of witnesses. It is exposure, it is dishonour, it is ruin! What then? *You* should take the risk, — for *you* must meet ruin, if you do not. *I* cannot. *I* have nothing to gain!"

"I dare not! I dare not!" murmured Beaufort, quite spirit-broken. "Subornation, dishonour, exposure! and I,

so respectable,—my character!—and my son against me, too!—my son, in whom I lived again! No, no; let them take all! Let them take it! Ha, ha! let them take it! Good day to you.”

“Where are you going?”

“I shall consult Mr. Blackwell, and I’ll let you know.”

And Beaufort walked tremulously back to his carriage.

“Go to his lawyer!” growled Lilburne. “Yes, if his *lawyer* can help him to defraud men lawfully, he’ll defraud them fast enough. *That* will be the respectable way of doing it! Um! This may be an ugly business for me—the paper found here,—if the girl can depose to what she heard, and she must have heard something. No, I think the laws of real property will hardly allow her evidence; and if they do—Um! My granddaughter,—is it possible! And Gawtrey rescued her mother, *my* child, from her own mother’s vices! I thought my liking to that girl different from any other I have ever felt: it *was* pure,—*it was*! It *was* pity,—affection. And I must never see her again,—must forget the whole thing! And I am growing old; and I am childless, and alone!” He paused, almost with a groan; and then the expression of his face changing to rage, he cried out: “The man threatened me, and I was a coward! What to do? Nothing! The defensive is my line. I shall play no more. I attack no one. Who will accuse Lord Lilburne? Still, Robert is a fool. I must not leave him to himself. Ho, there! Dykeman, the carriage! I shall go to London.”

Fortunate, no doubt, it was for Philip that Mr. Beaufort was not Lord Lilburne. For all history teaches us—public and private history, conquerors, statesmen, sharp hypocrites, and brave designers,—yes, they all teach us how mighty one man of great intellect and no scruple is against the justice of millions! The One Man *moves*; the Mass is inert. Justice sits on a throne; Roguery never rests,—Activity is the lever of Archimedes.

CHAPTER XVI.

QUAM multa injusta ac prava fiunt moribus.¹—TULL.

. . . Volat ambiguus
Mobilis alis Hora.²—SENECA.

MR. ROBERT BEAUFORT sought Mr. Blackwell, and long, rambling, and disjointed was his narrative. Mr. Blackwell, after some consideration, proposed to *set about doing* the very things that Lilburne had proposed at once to *do*; but the lawyer expressed himself legally and covertly, so that it did not seem to the sober sense of Mr. Beaufort at all the same plan. He was not the least alarmed at what Mr. Blackwell proposed, though so shocked at what Lilburne dictated. Blackwell would go the next day into Wales; he would find out Mr. Jones; he would *sound* him! Nothing was more common, with people of the nicest honour, than *just* to get a witness out of the way! Done in election petitions, for instance, every day.

"True," said Mr. Beaufort, much relieved.

Then, after having done that, Mr. Blackwell would return to town, and cross over to Boulogne to see this very impudent person whom Arthur (young men were so apt to be taken in!) had actually believed. He had no doubt he could settle it all. Robert Beaufort returned to Berkeley Square actually in spirits. There he found Lilburne, who, on reflection, seeing that Blackwell was at all events more up to the business than his brother, assented to the propriety of the arrangement.

Mr. Blackwell accordingly did set off the next day. *That next day*, perhaps, made all the difference. Within two hours from his gaining the document so important, Philip, without

¹ "How many unjust and vicious actions are perpetrated under the name of morals."

² "The hour flies moving with doubtful wings."

any subtler exertion of intellect than the decision of a plain, bold sense, had already forestalled both the peer and the lawyer. He had sent down Mr. Barlow's head clerk to his master in Wales with the document, and a short account of the manner in which it had been discovered. And fortunate, indeed, was it that the copy had been found; for all the inquiries of Mr. Barlow at A—— had failed, and probably would have failed, without such a clew, in fastening upon any one probable person to have officiated as Caleb Price's amanuensis. The sixteen hours' start Mr. Barlow gained over Blackwell enabled the former to see Mr. Jones, to show him his own handwriting, to get a written and witnessed attestation from which the curate, however poor, and however tempted, could never well have escaped (even had he been dishonest, which he was not) of his perfect recollection of the fact of making an extract from the registry at Caleb's desire, though he owned he had quite forgotten the names he extracted till they were again placed before him. Barlow took care to arouse Mr. Jones's interest in the case, quitted Wales, hastened over to Boulogne, saw Captain Smith, and without bribes, without threats, but by plainly proving to that worthy person that he could not return to England nor see his brother without being immediately arrested; that his brother's evidence was *already pledged* on the side of truth; and that by the acquisition of new testimony there could be no doubt that the suit would be successful,—he diverted the Captain from all disposition towards perfidy, convinced him on which side his interests lay, and saw him return to Paris, where very shortly afterwards he disappeared forever from this world, being forced into a duel, much against his will (with a Frenchman whom he had attempted to defraud), and shot through the lungs. Thus verifying a favourite maxim of Lord Lilburne's,—namely, that it does not do, in the long run, for little men to play the Great Game!

On the same day that Blackwell returned, frustrated in his half-and-half attempts to corrupt Mr. Jones, and not having been able even to discover Mr. Smith, Mr. Robert Beaufort received a notice of an Action for Ejectment to be brought

by Philip Beaufort at the next Assizes; and, to add to his afflictions, Arthur, whom he had hitherto endeavoured to amuse by a sort of ambiguous shilly-shally correspondence, became so alarmingly worse that his mother brought him up to town for advice. Lord Lilburne was, of course, sent for; and on learning all, his counsel was prompt.

"I told you before that this man loves your daughter. See if you can effect a compromise. The lawsuit will be ugly, and probably ruinous. He has a right to claim six years' arrears,—that is above £100,000. Make yourself his father-in-law, and me his uncle-in-law; and since we can't kill the wasp, we may at least soften the venom of his sting."

Beaufort, still perplexed, irresolute, sought his son; and for the first time, spoke to him frankly,—that is, frankly for Robert Beaufort! He owned that the copy of the register had been found by Lilburne in a secret drawer; he made the best of the story Lilburne himself furnished him with (adhering, of course, to the assertion uttered or insinuated to Philip) in regard to Fanny's abduction and interposition; he said nothing of his attempt to destroy the paper. Why should he? By admitting the copy in court—if so advised—he could get rid of Fanny's evidence altogether; even without such concession, her evidence might possibly be objected to or eluded. He confessed that he feared the witness who copied the register and the witness to the marriage were alive; and then he talked pathetically of his desire to do what was right, his dread of slander and misinterpretation. He said nothing of Sidney, and his belief that Sidney and Charles Spencer were the same; because, if his daughter were to be the instrument for effecting a compromise, it was clear that her engagement with Spencer must be cancelled and concealed. And luckily Arthur's illness and Camilla's timidity, joined now to her father's injunctions not to excite Arthur in his present state with any additional causes of anxiety, prevented the confidence that might otherwise have ensued between the brother and sister. And Camilla, indeed, had no heart for such a conference. How, when she looked on Arthur's glassy eye, and listened to his hectic cough, could

she talk to him of love and marriage? As to the automaton, Mrs. Beaufort, Robert made sure of *her* discretion.

Arthur listened attentively to his father's communication; and the result of that interview was the following letter from Arthur to his cousin:—

I write to you without fear of misconstruction, for I write to you unknown to all my family, and I am the only one of them who can have no personal interest in the struggle about to take place between my father and yourself. Before the law can decide between you, I shall be in my grave. I write this from the Bed of Death. Philip, I write this,—I, who stood beside a deathbed more sacred to you than mine,—I, who received your mother's last sigh. And with that sigh there was a smile that lasted when the sigh was gone, for I promised to befriend her children. Heaven knows how anxiously I sought to fulfil that solemn vow! Feeble and sick myself, I followed you and your brother with no aim, no prayer, but this,—to embrace you and say, "Accept a new brother in me." I spare you the humiliation, for it is yours, not mine, of recalling what passed between us when at last we met. Yet I still sought to save at least Sidney, more especially confided to my care by his dying mother. He mysteriously eluded our search; but we had reason, by a letter received from some unknown hand, to believe him saved and provided for. Again I met you at Paris. I saw you were poor. Judging from your associate, I might with justice think you depraved. Mindful of your declaration never to accept bounty from a Beaufort, and remembering with natural resentment the outrage I had before received from you, I judged it vain to seek and remonstrate with you, but I did not judge it vain to aid. I sent you, anonymously, what at least would suffice, if absolute poverty had subjected you to evil courses, to rescue you from them if your heart were so disposed. Perhaps that sum, trifling as it was, may have smoothed your path and assisted your career. And why tell you all this now? To dissuade from asserting rights you conceive to be just?—Heaven forbid! If justice is with you, so also is the duty due to your mother's name. But simply for this: that in asserting such rights, you content yourself with justice, not revenge; that in righting yourself you do not wrong others. If the law should decide for you, the arrears you could demand would leave my father and sister beggars. This may be law,—it would not be justice; for my father solemnly believed himself, and had every apparent probability in his favour, the true heir of the wealth that devolved upon him. This is not all. There may be circumstances connected with the discovery of a certain document that, if authentic, and I do not presume to question it, may decide

the contest so far as it rests on truth, — circumstances which might seem to bear hard upon my father's good name and faith. I do not know sufficiently of law to say how far these could be publicly urged, or, if urged, exaggerated and tortured by an advocate's calumnious ingenuity. But again, I say justice, and not revenge! And with this I conclude, enclosing to you these lines, written in your own hand, and leaving you the arbiter of their value.

ARTHUR BEAUFORT.

The lines inclosed were these, a second time placed before the reader: —

“I cannot guess who you are. They say that you call yourself a relation; that must be some mistake. I knew not that my poor mother had relations so kind. But, whoever you be, you soothed her last hours, she died in your arms; and if ever — years, long years, hence — we should chance to meet, and I can do anything to aid another, my blood and my life and my heart and my soul, — all are slaves to your will! If you be really of her kindred I commend to you my brother; he is at — with Mr. Morton. If you can serve him, my mother's soul will watch over you as a guardian angel. As for me, I ask no help from any one; I go into the world, and will carve out my own way. So much do I shrink from the thought of charity from others that I do not believe I could bless you as I do now, if your kindness to me did not close with the stone upon my mother's grave.

PHILIP.

This letter was sent to the only address of M. de Vaudemont which the Beauforts knew, — namely, his apartments in town, — and he did not receive it the day it was sent.

Meanwhile Arthur Beaufort's malady continued to gain ground rapidly. His father, absorbed in his own more selfish fears (though, at the first sight of Arthur, overcome by the alteration of his appearance), had ceased to consider his illness fatal. In fact, his affection for Arthur was rather one of pride than love; long absence had weakened the ties of early custom. He prized him as an heir rather than treasured him as a son. It almost seemed that as the Heritage was in danger, so the Heir became less dear: this was only because he was less thought of. Poor Mrs. Beaufort, yet but partially acquainted with the terrors of her husband, still clung to hope for Arthur. Her affection for him brought out from the

depths of her cold and insignificant character qualities that had never before been apparent. She watched, she nursed, she tended him. The fine lady was gone; nothing but the mother was left behind.

With a delicate constitution and with an easy temper, which yielded to the influence of companions inferior to himself except in bodily vigour and more sturdy will, Arthur Beaufort had been ruined by prosperity. His talents and acquirements, if not first-rate, at least far above mediocrity, had only served to refine his tastes, not to strengthen his mind; his amiable impulses, his charming disposition, and sweet temper, had only served to make him the dupe of the parasites that feasted on the lavish heir; his heart, frittered away in the usual round of light intrigues and hollow pleasures, had become too sated and exhausted for the redeeming blessings of a deep and a noble love. He had so lived for Pleasure that he had never known Happiness. His frame broken by excesses in which his better nature never took delight, he came home—to hear of ruin and to die!

It was evening in the sick-room. Arthur had risen from the bed to which, for some days, he had voluntarily taken, and was stretched on the sofa before the fire. Camilla was leaning over him, keeping in the shade, that he might not see the tears which she could not suppress. His mother had been endeavouring to amuse him, as she would have amused herself, by reading aloud one of the light novels of the hour, —novels that paint the life of the higher classes as one gorgeous holiday

“My dear mother,” said the patient, querulously, “I have no interest in these false descriptions of the life I have led. I know that life’s worth. Ah, had I been trained to some employment, some profession! had I—well—it is weak to repine. Mother, tell me, you have seen M. de Vaudemont: *is he strong and healthy?*”

“Yes; too much so. He has not your elegance, dear Arthur.”

“And do you admire him, Camilla? Has no other caught your heart or your fancy?”

"My dear Arthur," interrupted Mrs. Beaufort, you forget that Camilla is scarcely out; and of course a young girl's affections, if she's well brought up, are regulated by the experience of her parents. It is time to take the medicine: it certainly agrees with you; you have more colour to-day, my dear, dear son."

While Mrs. Beaufort was pouring out the medicine, the door gently opened, and Mr. Robert Beaufort appeared; behind him there rose a taller and a statelier form, but one which seemed more bent, more humbled, more agitated. Beaufort advanced. Camilla looked up and turned pale. The visitor escaped from Mr. Beaufort's grasp on his arm; he came forward, trembling; he fell on his knees beside Arthur, and seizing his hand, bent over it in silence,—but silence so stormy! silence more impressive than all words; his breast heaved, his whole frame shook. Arthur guessed at once whom he saw, and bent down gently as if to raise his visitor.

"Oh, Arthur! Arthur!" then cried Philip; "forgive me! My mother's comforter, my cousin, my brother! Oh, *brother*, forgive me!"

And as he half rose, Arthur stretched out his arms, and Philip clasped him to his breast.

It is in vain to describe the different feelings that agitated those who beheld,—the selfish congratulations of Robert, mingled with a better and purer feeling; the stupor of the mother; the emotions that she herself could not unravel, which rooted Camilla to the spot.

"You own me, then,—you own me!" cried Philip. "You accept the brotherhood that my mad passions once rejected! And you, too—you, Camilla,—you who once knelt by my side, under this very roof,—do you remember me *now*? Oh, Arthur! that letter—that letter! yes, indeed, that aid which I ascribed to any one rather than to you made the date of a fairer fortune. I may have owed to that aid the very fate that has preserved me till now; the very name which I have not discredited. No, no; do not think you can ask *me* a favour; you can but claim your due. Brother! my dear brother!"

CHAPTER XVII.

Warwick. — Exceeding well! his cares are now all over. — *Henry IV.*

THE excitement of this interview soon overpowering Arthur, Philip, in quitting the room with Mr. Beaufort, asked a conference with that gentleman; and they went into the very parlour from which the rich man had once threatened to expel the haggard suppliant. Philip glanced round the room, and the whole scene came again before him. After a pause, he thus began, —

“Mr. Beaufort, let the Past be forgotten. We may have need of mutual forgiveness, and I, who have so wronged your noble son, am willing to suppose that I misjudged you. I cannot, it is true, forego this lawsuit.”

Mr. Beaufort’s face fell.

“I have no right to do so. I am the trustee of my father’s honour and my mother’s name; I must vindicate both; I cannot forego this lawsuit. But when I once bowed myself to enter your house, — then only with a hope, where now I have the certainty, of obtaining my heritage, — it was with the resolve to bury in oblivion every sentiment that would transgress the most temperate justice. Now, I will do more. If the law decide *against* me, we are as we were; if *with* me — listen: I will leave you the lands of Beaufort, for your life and your son’s. I ask but for me and for mine such a deduction from your wealth as will enable me, should my brother be yet living, to provide for him; and (if you approve the choice, which out of all earth I would desire to make) to give whatever belongs to more refined or graceful existence than I myself care for, to her whom I would call my wife. Robert Beaufort, in this room I once asked you to restore to me the only being I then loved: I am now again your suppliant; and this time you have it in your power to grant my prayer. Let

Arthur be, in truth, my brother; give me, if I prove myself, as I feel assured, entitled to hold the name my father bore, give me your daughter as my wife; give me Camilla, and I will not envy you the lands I am willing for myself to resign; and if they pass to *my* children, those children will be your daughter's!"

The first impulse of Mr. Beaufort was to grasp the hand held out to him; to pour forth an incoherent torrent of praise and protestation, of assurances that he could not hear of such generosity, that what was right was right, that he should be proud of such a son-in-law, and much more in the same key. And in the midst of this, it suddenly occurred to Mr. Beaufort that if Philip's case were really as good as he said it was, he could not talk so coolly of resigning the property it would secure him for the term of a life (Mr. Beaufort thought of *his own*) so uncommonly good, to say nothing of Arthur's. At this notion, he thought it best not to commit himself too far; drew in as artfully as he could, until he could consult Lord Lilburne and his lawyer; and recollecting also that he had a great deal to manage with respect to Camilla and her prior attachment, he began to talk of his distress for Arthur, of the necessity of waiting a little before Camilla was spoken to while so agitated about her brother, of the exceedingly strong case which his lawyer advised him he possessed,—not but what he would rather rest the matter on justice than law,—and that if the law *should* be with him, he would not the less (provided he did not force his daughter's inclinations, of which, indeed, he had no fear) be most happy to bestow her hand on his brother's son, with such a portion as would be most handsome to all parties.

It often happens to us in this world, that when we come with our heart in our hands to some person or other, when we pour out some generous burst of feeling so enthusiastic and self-sacrificing that a bystander would call us fool and Quixote,—it often, I say, happens to us, to find our warm self suddenly thrown back upon our cold self; to discover that we are utterly uncomprehended, and that the swine who would have munched up the acorn does not know what to

make of the pearl. That sudden ice which then freezes over us, that supreme disgust and despair almost of the whole world, which for the moment we confound with the one worldling, they who have felt may reasonably ascribe to Philip. He listened to Mr. Beaufort in utter and contemptuous silence, and then replied only,—

“Sir, at all events this is a question for law to decide. If it decide as you think, it is for you to act; if as I think, it is for me. Till then I will speak to you no more of your daughter, or my intentions. Meanwhile, all I ask is the liberty to visit your son. I would not be banished from his sick-room!”

“My dear nephew!” cried Mr. Beaufort, again alarmed, “consider this house as your home.”

Philip bowed and retreated to the door, followed obsequiously by his uncle.

It chanced that both Lord Lilburne and Mr. Blackwell were of the same mind as to the course advisable for Mr. Beaufort now to pursue. Lord Lilburne was not only anxious to exchange a hostile litigation for an amicable lawsuit, but he was really eager to put the seal of relationship upon any secret with regard to himself that a man who might inherit £20,000 a year—a dead shot, and a bold tongue—might think fit to disclose. This made him more earnest than he otherwise might have been in advice as to other people’s affairs. He spoke to Beaufort as a man of the world, to Blackwell as a lawyer.

“Pin the man down to his generosity,” said Lilburne, “before he gets the property. Possession makes a great change in a man’s value of money. After all, you can’t enjoy the property when you’re dead: he gives it next to Arthur, who is not married; and if anything happen to Arthur, poor fellow, why, in devolving on your daughter’s husband and children, it goes in the right line. Pin him down at once: get credit with the world for the most noble and disinterested conduct, by letting your counsel state that the instant you discovered the lost document you wished to throw no obstacle in the way of proving the marriage, and that the only thing to consider is, if the marriage be proved; if so, you will be

the first to rejoice, etc. You know all that sort of humbug as well as any man!"

Mr. Blackwell suggested the same advice, though in different words,—after taking the opinions of three eminent members of the bar. Those opinions, indeed, were not all alike; one was adverse to Mr. Robert Beaufort's chance of success, one was doubtful of it, the third maintained that he had nothing to fear from the action,—except, possibly, the ill-natured construction of the world. Mr. Robert Beaufort disliked the idea of the world's ill-nature almost as much as he did that of losing his property. And when even this last and more encouraging authority, learning privately from Mr. Blackwell that Arthur's illness was of a nature to terminate fatally, observed that a compromise with a claimant, who was at all events Mr. Beaufort's nephew, by which Mr. Beaufort could secure the enjoyment of the estates to himself for life, and to his son for life also, should not (whatever his probabilities of legal success) be hastily rejected,—unless he had a peculiar affection for a very distant relation who, failing Mr. Beaufort's male issue and Philip's claim, would be heir-at-law, but whose rights would cease if Arthur liked to cut off the entail,—Mr. Beaufort at once decided. He had a personal dislike to that distant heir-at-law; he had a strong desire to retain the esteem of the world; he had an innate conviction of the justice of Philip's claim; he had a remorseful recollection of his brother's generous kindness to himself; he preferred to have for his heir, in case of Arthur's decease, a nephew who would marry his daughter, than a remote kinsman. And should, after all, the lawsuit fail to prove Philip's right, he was not sorry to have the estate in his own power by Arthur's act in cutting off the entail. Brief,—all these reasons decided him. He saw Philip, he spoke to Arthur; and all the preliminaries, as suggested above, were arranged between the parties. The entail was cut off, and Arthur secretly prevailed upon his father, to whom, for the present, the fee-simple thus belonged, to make a will, by which he bequeathed the estates to Philip without reference to the question of his legitimacy. Mr. Beaufort felt his conscience

greatly eased after this action,—which, too, he could always retract if he pleased; and henceforth the lawsuit became but a matter of form, so far as the property it involved was concerned.

While these negotiations went on, Arthur continued gradually to decline. Philip was with him always. The sufferer took a strange liking to this long-dreaded relation, this man of iron frame and thews. In Philip there was so much of life that Arthur almost felt as if in his presence itself there was an antagonism to death. And Camilla saw thus her cousin, day by day, hour by hour, in that sick chamber, lending himself, with the gentle tenderness of a woman, to soften the pang, to arouse the weariness, to cheer the dejection. Philip never spoke to her of love: in such a scene that had been impossible. She overcame in their mutual cares the embarrassment she had before felt in his presence; whatever her other feelings, she could not, at least, but be grateful to one so tender to her brother. Three letters of Charles Spencer had been, in the afflictions of the house, only answered by a brief line. She now took the occasion of a momentary and elusive amelioration in Arthur's disease to write to him more at length. She was carrying, as usual, the letter to her mother, when Mr. Beaufort met her, and took the letter from her hand. He looked embarrassed for a moment, and bade her follow him into his study. It was then that Camilla learned, for the first time, distinctly, the claims and rights of her cousin; then she learned also at what price those rights were to be enforced with the least possible injury to her father. Mr. Beaufort naturally put the case before her in the strongest point of the dilemma. He was to be ruined,—utterly ruined; a pauper, a beggar, if Camilla did not save him. The master of his fate demanded his daughter's hand. Habitually subservient to even a whim of her parents, this intelligence, the entreaty, the command with which it was accompanied, overwhelmed her. She answered but by tears; and Mr. Beaufort, assured of her submission, left her, to consider of the tone of the letter he himself should write to Mr. Spencer. He had sat down to this very task when he was

summoned to Arthur's room. His son was suddenly taken worse: spasms that threatened immediate danger convulsed and exhausted him; and when these were allayed, he continued for three days so feeble that Mr. Beaufort, his eyes now thoroughly opened to the loss that awaited him, had no thoughts even for worldly interests.

On the night of the third day, Philip, Robert Beaufort, his wife, his daughter, were grouped round the death-bed of Arthur. The sufferer had just awakened from sleep, and he motioned to Philip to raise him. Mr. Beaufort started, as by the dim light he saw *his* son in the arms of *Catherine's*! and another Chamber of Death seemed, shadow-like, to replace the one before him. Words, long since uttered, knelled in his ear, "There shall be a death-bed yet beside which you shall see the spectre of her, now so calm, rising for retribution from the grave!" His blood froze, his hair stood erect; he cast a hurried, shrinking glance round the twilight of the darkened room: and with a feeble cry, covered his white face with his trembling hands! But on Arthur's lips there was a serene smile; he turned his eyes from Philip to Camilla, and murmured, "*She* will repay you!" A pause, and the mother's shriek rang through the room! Robert Beaufort raised his face from his hands. His son was dead!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jul. — And what reward do you propose?

It must be my love. — *The Double Marriage.*

WHILE these events, dark, hurried, and stormy, had befallen the family of his betrothed, Sidney had continued his calm life by the banks of the lovely lake. After a few weeks, his confidence in Camilla's fidelity overbore all his apprehensions and forebodings. Her letters, though constrained by the inspec-

tion to which they were submitted, gave him inexpressible consolation and delight. He began, however, early to fancy that there was a change in their tone. The letters seemed to shun the one subject to which all others were as nought; they turned rather upon the guests assembled at Beaufort Court; and why I know not, — for there was nothing in them to authorize jealousy, — the brief words devoted to M. de Vaudemont filled him with uneasy and terrible suspicion. He gave vent to these feelings, as fully as he dared do, under the knowledge that his letter would be seen; and Camilla never again even mentioned the name of Vaudemont. Then there was a long pause; then her brother's arrival and illness were announced; then, at intervals, but a few hurried lines; then a complete, long, dreadful silence; and lastly, with a deep black border and a solemn black seal, came the following letter from Mr. Beaufort:—

MY DEAR SIR, — I have the unutterable grief to announce to you and your worthy uncle the irreparable loss I have sustained in the death of my only son. It is a month to-day since he departed this life. He died, sir, as a Christian *should* die, — humbly, penitently, — exaggerating the few faults of his short life, but (and here the writer's hypocrisy, though so natural to him — *was it that he knew not that he was hypocritical?* — fairly gave way before the real and human anguish for which there is no dictionary!) — but I cannot pursue this theme!

Slowly now awakening to the duties yet left me to discharge, I cannot but be sensible of the material difference in the prospects of my remaining child. Miss Beaufort is now the heiress to an ancient name and a large fortune. She subscribes with me to the necessity of consulting those new considerations which so melancholy an event forces upon her mind. The little fancy, or liking, — the acquaintance was too short for more, — that might naturally spring up between two amiable young persons thrown together in the country, must be banished from our thoughts. As a friend, I shall be always happy to hear of your welfare; and should you ever think of a profession in which I can serve you, you may command my utmost interest and exertions. I know, my young friend, what you will feel at first, and how disposed you will be to call me mercenary and selfish. Heaven knows if *that* be really my character! But at your age impressions are easily effaced; and any experienced friend of the world will assure you, that, in the altered circumstances of the case, I have no option. All intercourse and correspondence, of course,

cease with this letter, — until, at least, we may all meet with no sentiments but those of friendship and esteem. I desire my compliments to your worthy uncle, in which Mrs. and Miss Beaufort join; and I am sure you will be happy to hear that my wife and daughter, though still in great affliction, have suffered less in health than I could have ventured to anticipate.

Believe me, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

ROBERT BEAUFORT.

To C. SPENCER, Esq., Jun.

When Sidney received this letter, he was with Mr. Spencer, and the latter read it over the young man's shoulder, on which he leaned affectionately. When they came to the concluding words, Sidney turned round with a vacant look and a hollow smile. "You see, sir," he said, "you see —"

"My boy, my son, you bear this as you ought. Contempt will soon efface —"

Sidney started to his feet, and his whole countenance was changed.

"Contempt! yes, for *him*! But for *her* — *she* knows it not; she is no party to this! I cannot believe it, — I will not! I — I —" and he rushed out of the room. He was absent till nightfall, and when he returned, he endeavoured to appear calm — but it was in vain.

The next day brought him a letter from Camilla, written unknown to her parents, — short, it is true (confirming the sentence of separation contained in her father's), and imploring him not to reply to it; but still so full of gentle and of sorrowful feeling, so evidently worded in the wish to soften the anguish she inflicted, that it did more than soothe, — it even administered hope.

Now when Mr. Robert Beaufort had recovered the ordinary tone of his mind sufficiently to indite the letter Sidney had just read, he had become fully sensible of the necessity of concluding the marriage between Philip and Camilla before the publicity of the lawsuit. The action for the ejectment could not take place before the ensuing March or April. He would waive the ordinary etiquette of time and mourning to arrange all before. Indeed he lived in hourly fear lest Philip

should discover that he had a rival in his brother, and break off the marriage with its contingent advantages. The first announcement of such a suit in the newspapers might reach the Spencers; and if the young man were, as he doubted not, Sidney Beaufort, would necessarily bring him forward, and ensure the dreaded explanation. Thus apprehensive and ever scheming, Robert Beaufort spoke to Philip so much, and with such apparent feeling, of his wish to gratify at the earliest possible period the last wish of his son, in the union now arranged; he spoke with such seeming consideration and good sense of the avoidance of all scandal and misinterpretation in the suit itself, which suit a previous marriage between the claimant and his daughter would show at once to be of so amicable a nature, — that Philip, ardently in love as he was, could not but assent to any hastening of his expected happiness compatible with decorum. As to any previous publicity by way of newspaper comment, he agreed with Mr. Beaufort in deprecating it. But then came the question, What name was he to bear in the interval?

“As to that,” said Philip, somewhat proudly, “when, after my mother’s suit in her own behalf, I persuaded her not to bear the name of Beaufort, though her due, — and for my own part, I prized her own modest name, which under such dark appearances was in reality spotless, as much as the loftier one which you bear and my father bore, — so I shall not resume the name the law denies me till the law restores it to me. Law alone can efface the wrong which law has done me.”

Mr. Beaufort was pleased with this reasoning (erroneous though it was), and he now hoped that all would be safely arranged.

That a girl so situated as Camilla, and of a character not energetic or profound, but submissive, dutiful, and timid, should yield to the arguments of her father, the desire of her dying brother; that she should not dare to refuse to become the instrument of peace to a divided family, the saving sacrifice to her father’s endangered fortunes; that, in fine, when, nearly a month after Arthur’s death, her father, leading her

into the room, where Philip waited her footstep with a beating heart, placed her hand in his, and Philip falling on his knees said, "May I hope to retain this hand for life?" she should falter out such words as he might construe into not reluctant acquiescence, — that all this should happen is so natural that the reader is already prepared for it. But still she thought with bitter and remorseful feelings of him thus deliberately and faithlessly renounced. She felt how deeply he had loved her; she knew how fearful would be his grief. She looked sad and thoughtful; but her brother's death was sufficient in Philip's eyes to account for that. The praises and gratitude of her father, to whom she suddenly seemed to become an object of even greater pride and affection than ever Arthur had been; the comfort of a generous heart, that takes pleasure in the very sacrifice it makes; the acquittal of her conscience as to the motives of her conduct, began, however, to produce their effect. Nor, as she had lately seen more of Philip, could she be insensible of his attachment, of his many noble qualities, of the pride which most women might have felt in his addresses, when his rank was once made clear; and as she had ever been of a character more regulated by duty than passion, so one who could have seen what was passing in her mind would have had little fear for Philip's future happiness in her keeping, — little fear but that, when once married to him, her affections would have gone along with her duties; and that if the first love were yet recalled, it would be with a sigh due rather to some romantic recollection than some continued regret. Few of either sex are ever united to their first love; yet married people jog on, and call each other "my dear" and "my darling" all the same! It might be, it is true, that Philip would be scarcely loved with the intenseness with which he loved; but if Camilla's feelings were capable of corresponding to the ardent and impassioned ones of that strong and vehement nature, such feelings were not yet developed in her. The heart of the woman might still be half concealed in the vale of the virgin innocence. Philip himself was satisfied; he believed that he was beloved, — for it is the property of love, in a large and noble heart, to reflect itself, and

to see its own image in the eyes on which it looks. As the Poet gives ideal beauty and excellence to some ordinary child of Eve, worshipping less the being that is than the being he imagines and conceives, so Love, which makes us all poets for a while, throws its own divine light over a heart perhaps really cold; and becomes dazzled into the joy of a false belief by the very lustre with which it surrounds its object.

The more, however, Camilla saw of Philip, the more (gradually overcoming her former mysterious and superstitious awe of him) she grew familiarized to his peculiar cast of character and thought, so the more she began to distrust her father's assertion that he had insisted on her hand as a price, a bargain, an equivalent for the sacrifice of a dire revenge. And with this thought came another. Was she worthy of this man? — was she not deceiving him? Ought she not to say, at least, that she *had* known a previous attachment, however determined she might be to subdue it? Often the desire for this just and honourable confession trembled on her lips, and as often was it checked by some chance circumstance or some maiden fear. Despite their connection, there was not yet between them that delicious intimacy which ought to accompany the affiancing of two hearts and souls. The gloom of the house, the restraint on the very language of love imposed by a death so recent and so deplored, accounted in much for this reserve. And for the rest, Robert Beaufort prudently left them very few and very brief opportunities to be alone.

In the meantime, Philip (now persuaded that the Beauforts were ignorant of his brother's fate) had set Mr. Barlow's activity in search of Sidney; and his painful anxiety to discover one so dear and so mysteriously lost was the only cause of uneasiness apparent in the brightening Future. While these researches, hitherto fruitless, were being made, it so happened, as London began now to refill, and gossip began now to revive, that a report got abroad, no one knew how (probably from the servants) that M. de Vaudemont, a distinguished French officer, was shortly to lead the daughter and sole heiress of Robert Beaufort, Esq., M. P., to the hymeneal altar; and that report very quickly found its way into the

London papers; from the London papers it spread to the provincial; it reached the eyes of Sidney in his now gloomy and despairing solitude. The day that he read it he disappeared.

CHAPTER XIX.

Jul. . . . Good lady, love him!
You have a noble and an honest gentleman.
I ever found him so.
Love him no less than I have done, and serve him,
And Heaven shall bless you, — you shall bless my ashes.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Double Marriage.*

WE have been too long absent from Fanny; it is time to return to her. The delight she experienced when Philip made her understand all the benefits, the blessings, that her courage, nay, her *intellect*, had bestowed upon him, the blushing ecstasy with which she heard (as they returned to H——, the eventful morning of her deliverance, side by side, her hand clasped in his, and often pressed to his grateful lips) his praises, his thanks, his fear for her safety, his joy at regaining her, — all this amounted to a bliss which till then she could not have conceived that life was capable of bestowing. And when he left her at H——, to hurry to his lawyer's with the recovered document, it was but for an hour. He returned, and did not quit her for several days; and in that time he became sensible of her astonishing, and, to him, it seemed miraculous, improvement in all that renders Mind the equal to Mind, — miraculous, for he guessed not the Influence that makes miracles its commonplace. And now he listened attentively to her when she conversed; he read with her (though reading was never much in his vocation); his unfastidious ear was charmed with her voice, when it sang those simple songs; and his manner (impressed alike by gratitude for the signal service rendered to him, and by the discovery that Fanny was

no longer a child, whether in mind or years), though not less gentle than before, was less familiar, less superior, more respectful, and more earnest. It was a change which raised her in her own self-esteem. Ah, those were rosy days for Fanny!

A less sagacious judge of character than Lilburne would have formed doubts perhaps of the nature of Philip's interest in Fanny. But he comprehended at once the fraternal interest which a man like Philip might well take in a creature like Fanny, if commended to his care by a protector whose doom was so awful as that which had engulfed the life of William Gawtreys. Lilburne had some thoughts at first of claiming her; but as he had no power to compel her residence with him, he did not wish, on consideration, to come again in contact with Philip upon ground so full of humbling recollections as that still overshadowed by the images of Gawtreys and Mary. He contented himself with writing an artful letter to Simon, stating that from Fanny's residence with Mr. Gawtreys, and from her likeness to her mother, whom he had only seen as a child, he had conjectured the relationship she bore to himself; and having obtained other evidence of that fact (he did not say what or where), he had not scrupled to remove her to his roof, meaning to explain all to Mr. Simon Gawtreys the next day. This letter was accompanied by one from a lawyer, informing Simon Gawtreys that Lord Lilburne would pay £200 a year, in quarterly payments, to his order; and that he was requested to add, that when the young lady he had so benevolently reared came of age, or married, an adequate provision would be made for her. Simon's mind blazed up at this last intelligence, when read to him, though he neither comprehended nor sought to know why Lord Lilburne should be so generous, or what that noble person's letter to himself was intended to convey. For two days, he seemed restored to vigorous sense; but when he had once clutched the first payment made in advance, the touch of the money seemed to numb him back to his lethargy: the excitement of desire died in the dull sense of possession.

And just at that time Fanny's happiness came to a close.

Philip received Arthur Beaufort's letter; and now ensued long and frequent absences; and on his return, for about an hour or so at a time, he spoke of sorrow and death; and the books were closed and the songs silenced. All fear for Fanny's safety was, of course, over; all necessity for her work. Their little establishment was increased. She never stirred out without Sarah; yet she would rather that there had been some danger on her account for *him* to guard against, or some trial that his smile might soothe. His prolonged absences began to prey upon her; the books ceased to interest, no study filled up the dreary gap, her step grew listless, her cheek pale; she was sensible at last that his presence had become necessary to her very life. One day, he came to the house earlier than usual, and with a much happier and serener expression of countenance than he had worn of late.

Simon was dozing in his chair, with his old dog, now scarce vigorous enough to bark, curled up at his feet. Neither man nor dog was more as a witness to what was spoken than the leathern chair, or the hearth-rug on which they severally reposed.

There was something which, in actual life, greatly contributed to the interest of Fanny's strange lot, but which, in narration, I feel I cannot make sufficiently clear to the reader; and this was her connection and residence with that old man, — *her* character forming, as *his* was completely gone; here, the blank becoming filled, there, the page fading to a blank. It was the utter, total Deathliness-in-Life of Simon, that, while so impressive to see, renders it impossible to bring him before the reader in his full force of contrast to the young Psyche. He seldom spoke, often not from morning till night; he now seldom stirred. It is in vain to describe the indescribable: let the reader draw the picture for himself. And whenever (as I sometimes think he will, after he has closed this book) he conjures up the idea he attaches to the name of its heroine, let him see before her, as she glides through the humble room; as she listens to the voice of him she loves; as she sits musing by the window, with the church spire just visible; as day by day the soul brightens and ex-

pands within her, — still let the reader see within the same walls, gray-haired, blind, dull to all feeling, frozen to all life, that stony image of Time and Death! Perhaps then he may understand why they who beheld the real and living Fanny blooming under that chill and mass of shadow, felt that her grace, her simplicity, her charming beauty, were raised by the contrast, till they grew associated with thoughts and images, mysterious and profound, belonging not more to the lovely than to the sublime.

So there sat the old man; and Philip, though aware of his presence, speaking as if he were alone with Fanny, after touching on more casual topics, thus addressed her, —

“My true and my dear friend, it is to you that I shall owe, not only my rights and fortune, but the vindication of my mother’s memory. You have not only placed flowers upon that gravestone, but it is owing to you, under Providence, that it will be inscribed at last with the Name which refutes all calumny. Young and innocent as you now are, my gentle and beloved benefactress, you cannot as yet know what a blessing it will be to me to engrave that Name upon that simple stone. Hereafter, when you yourself are a wife, a mother, you will comprehend the service you have rendered to the living and the dead!”

He stopped, struggling with the rush of emotions that overflowed his heart. Alas, the DEAD! what service can we render to them? What availed it now, either to the dust below or to the immortality above, that the fools and knaves of this world should mention the Catherine whose life was gone, whose ears were deaf, with more or less respect? There is in calumny that poison that, even when the character throws off the slander, the heart remains diseased beneath the effect. They say that truth comes sooner or later; but it seldom comes before the soul, passing from agony to contempt, has grown callous to men’s judgments. Calumniate a human being in youth, — adulate that being in age; what has been the interval? Will the adulation atone either for the torture, or the hardness which the torture leaves at last? And if, as in Catherine’s case (a case how common!), the truth come too

late, if the tomb is closed, if the heart you have wrung can be wrung no more, — why, the truth is as valueless as the epitaph on a forgotten Name! Some such conviction of the hollowness of his own words, when he spoke of service to the dead, smote upon Philip's heart, and stopped the flow of his words.

Fanny, conscious only of his praise, his thanks, and the tender affection of his voice, stood still silent, her eyes down-cast, her breast heaving.

Philip resumed, —

"And now, Fanny, my honoured sister, I would thank you for more, were it possible, even than this. I shall owe to you not only name and fortune, but happiness. It is from the rights to which you have assisted me, and which will shortly be made clear, that I am able to demand a hand I have so long coveted, — the hand of one as dear to me as you are. In a word, the time has this day been fixed, when I shall have a home to offer to you and to this old man, when I can present to you a sister who will prize you as I do, — for I love you so dearly — I owe you so much — that even that home would lose half its smiles if you were not there. Do you understand me, Fanny? The sister I speak of will be my wife!"

The poor girl, who heard this speech of most cruel tenderness, did not fall or faint or evince any outward emotion, except in a deadly paleness. She seemed like one turned to stone. Her very breath forsook her for some moments, and then came back with a long deep sigh. She laid her hand lightly on his arm, and said calmly, —

"Yes, I understand. We once saw a wedding. You are to be married; I shall see *yours*!"

"You shall; and later, perhaps, I may see your own. I have a brother. Ah! if I could but find him — younger than I am — beautiful almost as you!"

"You will be happy," said Fanny, still calmly.

"I have long placed my hopes of happiness in such a union! Stay, where are you going?"

"To pray for you," said Fanny, with a smile in which there

was something of the old vacancy, as she walked gently from the room. Philip followed her with moistened eyes. Her manner might have deceived one more vain. He soon after quitted the house, and returned to town.

Three hours after, Sarah found Fanny stretched on the floor of her own room, so still, so white, that for some moments the old woman thought life was gone. She recovered, however, by degrees; and after putting her hands to her eyes, and muttering some moments, seemed much as usual, except that she was more silent, and that her lips remained colourless, and her hands cold like stone.

CHAPTER XX.

Vec. Ye see what follows.

Duke. O gentle sir! this shape again!—*The Chances.*

THAT evening Sidney Beaufort arrived in London. It is the nature of solitude to make passions calm on the surface agitated in the deeps. Sidney had placed his whole existence in one object. When the letter arrived that told him to hope no more, he was at first rather sensible of the terrible and dismal blank, the "void abyss," to which all his future was suddenly changed than roused to vehement and turbulent emotion. But Camilla's letter had, as we have seen, raised his courage and animated his heart. To the idea of her faith he still clung with the instinct of hope in the midst of despair. The tidings that she was absolutely betrothed to another, and in so short a time since her rejection of him, let loose from all restraint his darker and more tempestuous passions. In a state of mind bordering upon frenzy he hurried to London, to seek her, to see her,—with what intent, what hope, if hope there were, he himself could scarcely tell. But what man who has loved with fervour and trust will be contented to receive the sentence of eternal separation ex-

cept from the very lips of the one thus worshipped and thus foresworn?

The day had been intensely cold. Towards evening the snow fell fast and heavily. Sidney had not, since a child, been before in London; and the immense city, covered with a wintry and icy mist, through which the hurrying passengers and the slow-moving vehicles passed, spectre-like, along the dismal and slippery streets opened, to the stranger no hospitable arms. He knew not a step of the way; he was pushed to and fro, his scarce intelligible questions impatiently answered; the snow covered him, the frost pierced to his veins. At length a man, more kindly than the rest, seeing that he was a stranger to London, procured him a hackney-coach, and directed the driver to the distant quarter of Berkeley Square. The snow balled under the hoofs of the horses, the groaning vehicle proceeded at the pace of a hearse. At length, and after a period of such suspense and such emotion as Sidney never in after-life could recall without a shudder; the coach stopped, the benumbed driver heavily descended, the sound of the knocker knelled loud through the muffled air, and the light from Mr. Beaufort's hall glared full upon the dizzy eyes of the visitor. He pushed aside the porter, and sprang into the hall. Luckily, one of the footmen who had attended Mrs. Beaufort to the Lakes recognized him, and in answer to his breathless inquiry, said,—

“Why, indeed, Mr. Spencer, Miss Beaufort *is* at home — upstairs in the drawing-room with master and mistress and M. de Vaudemont; but —”

Sidney waited for no more. He bounded up the stairs, he opened the first door that presented itself to him, and burst, unannounced and unlooked for, upon the eyes of the group seated within. He saw not the terrified start of Mr. Robert Beaufort; he heeded not the faint, nervous exclamation of the mother; he caught not the dark and wondering glance of the stranger seated beside Camilla. He saw but Camilla herself, and in a moment he was at her feet.

“Camilla, I am here! I who love you so,—I who have nothing in the world but you! I am here to learn from you,

and you alone, if I am indeed abandoned,—if you are indeed to be another's!"

He had dashed his hat from his brow as he sprang forward; his long fair hair, damp with the snows, fell disordered over his forehead; his eyes were fixed, as for life and death, upon the pale face and trembling lips of Camilla. Robert Beaufort, in great alarm, and well aware of the fierce temper of Philip, anticipative of some rash and violent impulse, turned his glance upon his destined son-in-law; but there was no angry pride in the countenance he there beheld. Philip had risen, but his frame was bent, his knees knocked together, his lips were parted, his eyes were staring full upon the face of the kneeling man.

Suddenly Camilla, sharing her father's fear, herself half rose, and with an unconscious pathos stretched one hand, as if to shelter, over Sidney's head, and looked to Philip. Sidney's eyes followed hers. He sprang to his feet.

"What, then, it is true! And this is the man for whom I am abandoned! But unless you—*you*, with your own lips, tell me that you love me no more—that you love another—I will not yield you but with life."

He stalked sternly and impetuously up to Philip, who recoiled as his rival advanced. The characters of the two men seemed suddenly changed. The timid dreamer seemed dilated into the fearless soldier; the soldier seemed shrinking, quailing, into nameless terror. Sidney grasped that strong arm, as Philip still retreated, with his slight and delicate fingers,—grasped it with violence and menace; and frowning into the face from which the swarthy blood was scared away, he said, in a hollow whisper,—

"Do you hear me? Do you comprehend me? I say that she shall not be forced into a marriage at which I yet believe her heart rebels. My claim is holier than yours. Renounce her, or win her but with my blood."

Philip did not apparently hear the words thus addressed to him. His whole senses seemed absorbed in the one sense of sight. He continued to gaze upon the speaker till his eye dropped on the hand that yet gripped his arm; and as he thus

looked, he uttered an inarticulate cry. He caught the hand in his own and pointed to a ring on the finger, but remained speechless. Mr. Beaufort approached, and began some stammered words of soothing to Sidney; but Philip motioned him to be silent, and at last, as if by a violent effort, gasped forth, not to Sidney but to Beaufort,—

“His name?—his name?”

“It is Mr. Spencer,—Mr. Charles Spencer,” cried Beaufort.

“Listen to me, I will explain all; I—”

“Hush, hush!” cried Philip; and turning to Sidney he put his hand on his shoulder, and looking him full in the face, said,—

“Have you not known another name? Are you not—Yes, it is so—it is—it is! Follow me—follow!”

And still retaining his grasp, and leading Sidney, who was now subdued, awed, and a prey to new and wild suspicions, he moved on gently, stride by stride, his eyes fixed on that fair face, his lips muttering, till the closing door shut both forms from the eyes of the three there left.

It was the adjoining room into which Philip led his rival. It was lit but by a small reading lamp, and the bright, steady blaze of the fire; and by this light they both continued to gaze on each other, as if spell-bound, in complete silence. At last Philip, by an irresistible impulse, fell upon Sidney’s bosom, and clasping him with convulsive energy, gasped out,—

“Sidney! Sidney!—my mother’s son!”

“What!” exclaimed Sidney, struggling from the embrace, and at last freeing himself; “it is you, then!—you, my own brother! You, who have been hitherto the thorn in my path, the cloud in my fate! You, who are now come to make me a wretch for life! I love that woman, and you tear her from me! You, who subjected my infancy to hardship, and but for Providence might have degraded my youth, by your example, into shame and guilt!”

“Forbear! forbear!” cried Philip, with a voice so shrill in its agony that it smote the hearts of those in the adjoining chamber like the shriek of some despairing soul. They looked

at each other, but not one had the courage to break upon the interview.

Sidney himself was appalled by the sound. He threw himself on a seat, and overcome by passions so new to him, by excitement so strange, hid his face, and sobbed as a child.

Philip walked rapidly to and fro the room for some moments; at length he paused opposite to Sidney, and said, with the deep calmness of a wronged and goaded spirit,—

“Sidney Beaufort, hear me! When my mother died she confided you to my care, my love, and my protection. In the last lines that her hand traced she bade me think less of myself than of you; to be to you as a father as well as brother. The hour that I read that letter I fell on my knees, and vowed that I would fulfil that injunction,—that I would sacrifice my very self, if I could give fortune or happiness to you. And this not for your sake alone, Sidney; no! but as my mother—our wronged, our belied, our broken-hearted mother! Oh, Sidney, Sidney! have you no tears for *her*, too?” He passed his hand over his own eyes for a moment, and resumed—“but as our mother in that last letter said to me, ‘let *my* love pass into your breast for him,’ so, Sidney, so in all that I could do for you I fancied that my mother’s smile looked down upon me, and that in serving you it was my mother whom I obeyed. Perhaps hereafter, Sidney, when we talk over that period of my earlier life, when I worked for you, when the degradation you speak of (there was no crime in it!) was borne cheerfully for your sake, and yours the holiday though mine the task,—perhaps hereafter you will do me more justice. You left me, or were reft from me; and I gave all the little fortune that my mother had bequeathed us to get some tidings from you. I received your letter,—that bitter letter,—and I cared not then that I was a beggar, since I was alone. You talk of what I have cost you—*you* talk! And you now ask me to—to— Merciful Heaven! let me understand you. Do you love Camilla? Does she love you? Speak—speak—explain—what new agony awaits me?”

It was then that Sidney, affected and humbled amidst all his more selfish sorrows by his brother’s language and man-

ner, related, as succinctly as he could, the history of his affection for Camilla, the circumstances of their engagement, and ended by placing before him the letter he had received from Mr. Beaufort.

In spite of all his efforts for self-control, Philip's anguish was so great, so visible, that Sidney, after looking at his working features, his trembling hands, for a moment, felt all the earlier parts of his nature melt in a flow of generous sympathy and remorse. He flung himself on the breast from which he had shrunk before, and cried,—

"Brother, brother! forgive me; I see how I have wronged you. If she has forgotten me, if she love you, *take* her and be happy!"

Philip returned his embrace, but without warmth, and then moved away; and, again, in great disorder, paced the room. His brother only heard disjointed exclamations that seemed to escape him unawares: "They said she loved *me*! Heaven give me strength! Mother, Mother, let me fulfil my vow! Oh, that I had died ere this!" He stopped at last, and the large dewdrops rolled down his forehead.

"Sidney," said he, "there is a mystery here that I comprehend not; but my mind now is very confused. If she loves you—*if*! Is it possible for a woman to love *two*? Well, well, I go to solve the riddle: wait here!"

He vanished into the next room, and for nearly half an hour Sidney was alone. He heard through the partition murmured voices; he caught more clearly the sound of Camilla's sobs. The particulars of that interview between Philip and Camilla, alone at first (afterwards Mr. Robert Beaufort was re-admitted), Philip never disclosed; nor could Sidney himself ever obtain a clear account from Camilla, who could not recall it, even years after, without great emotion. But at last the door was opened, and Philip entered, leading Camilla by the hand. His face was calm, and there was a smile on his lips; a greater dignity than even that habitual to him was diffused over his whole person. Camilla was holding her handkerchief to her eyes and weeping passionately. Mr. Beaufort followed them with a mortified and slinking air.

"Sidney," said Philip, "it is past. All is arranged. I yield to your earlier, and therefore better, claim. Mr. Beaufort consents to your union. He will tell you, at some fitter time, that our birthright is at last made clear, and that there is no blot on the name we shall hereafter bear. Sidney, embrace your bride!"

Amazed, delighted, and still half incredulous, Sidney seized and kissed the hand of Camilla; and as he then drew her to his breast, she said, as she pointed to Philip,—

"Oh, if you do love me as you say, see in him the generous, the noble—" Fresh sobs broke off her speech, but as Sidney sought again to take her hand, she whispered, with a touching and womanly sentiment, "Ah, respect *him*: see!" And Sidney, looking then at his brother, saw that though he still attempted to smile, his lip writhed, and his features were drawn together, as one whose frame is wrung by torture but who struggles not to groan.

He flew to Philip, who, grasping his hand, held him back, and said,—

"I have fulfilled my vow! I have given you up the only blessing my life has known. Enough, you are happy; and I shall be so too, when God pleases to soften this blow. And now you must not wonder or blame me, if, though so lately found, I leave you for a while. Do me one kindness,—you, Sidney—you, Mr. Beaufort. Let the marriage take place at H—, in the village church by which my mother sleeps. Let it be delayed till the suit is terminated; by that time I shall hope to meet you all,—to meet *you*, Camilla, as I ought to meet my brother's wife. Till then, my presence will not sadden your happiness. Do not seek to see me; do not expect to hear from me. Hist! be silent, all of you; my heart is yet bruised and sore. O *Thou*," and here, deepening his voice, he raised his arms, "Thou who hast preserved my youth from such snares and such peril, who hast guided my steps from the abyss to which they wandered, and beneath whose hand I now bow, grateful if chastened, receive this offering, and bless that union! Fare ye well!"

CHAPTER XXI.

HEAVEN'S airs amid the harpstrings dwell,
And we wish they ne'er may fade.
They cease ; and the soul is a silent cell,
Where music never played.
Dream follows dream through the long night-hours.

WILSON: *The Past, a Poem.*

THE self-command which Philip had obtained for a while deserted him when he was without the house. His mind felt broken up into chaos. He hurried on, mechanically, on foot; he passed street upon street, now solitary and deserted, as the lamps gleamed upon the thick snow. The city was left behind him. He paused not, till, breathless, and exhausted in spirit if not in frame, he reached the churchyard where Catherine's dust reposed. The snow had ceased to fall, but it lay deep over the graves; the yew-trees, clad in their white shrouds, gleamed ghost-like through the dimness. Upon the rail that fenced the tomb yet hung a wreath that Fanny's hand had placed there; but the flowers were hid: it was a wreath of snow! Through the intervals of the huge and still clouds there gleamed a few melancholy stars. The very calm of the holy spot seemed unutterably sad. The Death of the year overhung the Death of man; and as Philip bent over the tomb, within and without all was ICE and NIGHT!

For hours he remained on that spot, alone with his grief and absorbed in his prayer. Long past midnight Fanny heard his step on the stairs, and the door of his chamber close with unwonted violence. She heard, too, for some time, his heavy tread on the floor, till suddenly all was silent. The next morning, when, at the usual hour, Sarah entered to unclose the shutters and light the fire, she was startled by wild exclamations and wilder laughter: the fever had mounted to the brain; he was delirious.

For several weeks Philip Beaufort was in imminent danger. For a considerable part of that time he was unconscious; and when the peril was past, his recovery was slow and gradual. It was the only illness to which his vigorous frame had ever been subjected, and the fever had perhaps exhausted him more than it might have done one in whose constitution the disease had encountered less resistance. His brother, imagining he had gone abroad, was unacquainted with his danger. None tended his sick-bed save the hireling nurse, the feeble physician, and the unpurchaseable heart of the only being to whom the wealth and rank of the Heir of Beaufort Court were as nothing. Here was reserved for him Fate's crowning lesson, in the vanity of those human wishes which anchor in gold and power. For how many years had the exile and the outcast pined indignantly for his birthright? Lo! it was won: and with it came the crushed heart and the smitten frame. As he slowly recovered sense and reasoning, these thoughts struck him forcibly. He felt as if he were rightly punished in having disdained, during his earlier youth, the enjoyments within his reach. Was there nothing in the glorious health, the unconquerable hope, the heart, if wrung and chafed and sorely tried, free at least from the direst anguish of the passions,—disappointed and jealous love? Though now certain, if spared to the future, to be rich, powerful, righted in name and honour, might he not from that sick-bed envy his earlier past?—even when with his brother orphan he wandered through the solitary fields, and felt with what energies we are gifted when we have something to protect; or when, loving and beloved, he saw life smile out to him in the eyes of Eugénie; or when, after that melancholy loss, he wrestled boldly and breast to breast with Fortune, in a far land, for honour and independence? There is something in severe illness, especially if it be in violent contrast to the usual strength of the body, which has often the most salutary effect upon the mind; which often, by the affliction of the frame, roughly wins us from the too morbid pains of the heart; which makes us feel that in mere LIFE, enjoyed as the robust enjoy it, God's Great Principle of Good breathes and

moves. We rise thus from the sick-bed softened and humbled, and more disposed to look around us for such blessings as we may yet command.

The return of Philip, his danger, the necessity of exertion, of tending him, had roused Fanny from a state which might otherwise have been permanently dangerous to the intellect so lately ripened within her. With what patience, with what fortitude, with what unutterable thought and devotion, she fulfilled that best and holiest woman's duty, let the man whose struggle with life and death has been blessed with the vigil that wakes and saves imagine to himself. And in all her anxiety and terror she had glimpses of a happiness which it seemed to her almost criminal to acknowledge; for, even in his delirium, her voice seemed to have some soothing influence over him, and he was calmer while she was by. And when at last he was conscious, her face was the first he saw, and her name the first which his lips uttered. As then he grew gradually stronger, and the bed was deserted for the sofa, he took more than the old pleasure in hearing her read to him, which she did with a feeling that lecturers cannot teach. And once, in a pause from this occupation, he spoke to her frankly; he sketched his past history, his last sacrifice. And Fanny, as she wept, learned that he was no more another's!

It has been said that this man, naturally of an active and impatient temperament, had been little accustomed to seek those resources which are found in books; but somehow in that sick chamber it was Fanny's voice,—the voice of *her* over whose mind he had once so haughtily lamented,—that taught him how much of aid and solace the Herd of Men derive from the Everlasting Genius of the Few.

Gradually, and interval by interval, moment by moment, thus drawn together, all thought beyond shut out (for, however crushing for the time the blow that had stricken Philip from health and reason, he was not that slave to a guilty fancy that he could voluntarily indulge—that he would not earnestly seek to shun—all sentiments that yet turned with unholy yearning towards the betrothed of his brother),—gradually, I say, and slowly, came those progressive and de-

licious epochs which mark a revolution in the affections. Unspeakable gratitude, brotherly tenderness, the united strength of compassion and respect that he had felt for Fanny seemed, as he gained health, to mellow into feelings yet more exquisite and deep. He could no longer delude himself with a vain and imperious belief that it was a defective mind that his heart protected; he began again to be sensible to the rare beauty of that tender face,—more lovely, perhaps, for the paleness that had replaced its bloom. The fancy that he had so imperiously checked before—before he saw Camilla—returned to him, and neither pride nor honour had now the right to chase the soft wings away. One evening, fancying himself alone, he fell into a profound reverie; he awoke with a start, and the exclamation, “Was it true love that I ever felt for Camilla, or a passion, a frenzy, a delusion?”

His exclamation was answered by a sound that seemed both of joy and grief. He looked up, and saw Fanny before him; the light of the moon, just risen, fell full on her form, but her hands were clasped before her face; he heard her sob.

“Fanny, dear Fanny!” he cried, and sought to throw himself from the sofa to her feet; but she drew herself away, and fled from the chamber silent as a dream.

Philip rose, and for the first time since his illness, walked, but with feeble steps, to and fro the room. With what different emotions from those in which last, in fierce and intolerable agony, he had paced that narrow boundary! Returning health crept through his veins; a serene, a kindly, a celestial joy circumfused his heart. Had the time yet come when the old Florimel had melted into snow; when the new and the true one, with its warm life, its tender beauty, its maiden wealth of love, had risen before his hopes? He paused before the window; the spot within seemed so confined, the night without so calm and lovely, that he forgot his still-clinging malady, and unclosed the casement. The air came soft and fresh upon his temples, and the church-tower and spire, for the first time, did not seem to him to rise in gloom against the heavens. Even the gravestone of Catherine, half in moonlight, half in shadow, appeared to him to wear a smile.

His mother's memory was become linked with the living Fanny.

"Thou art vindicated, thy Sidney is happy," he murmured; "to *her* the thanks!"

Fair hopes and soft thoughts busy within him, he remained at the casement till the increasing chill warned him of the danger he incurred.

The next day, when the physician visited him, he found the fever had returned. For many days Philip was again in danger,—dull, unconscious even of the step and voice of Fanny.

He woke at last as from a long and profound sleep,—woke so refreshed, so revived, that he felt at once that some great crisis had been passed, and that at length he had struggled back to the sunny shores of Life.

By his bedside sat Liancourt, who, long alarmed at his disappearance, had at last contrived, with the help of Mr. Barlow, to trace him to Gawtrey's house, and had for several days taken share in the vigils of poor Fanny.

While he was yet explaining all this to Philip, and congratulating him on his evident recovery, the physician entered to confirm the congratulation. In a few days the invalid was able to quit his room, and nothing but change of air seemed necessary for his convalescence. It was then that Liancourt, who had for two days seemed impatient to unburden himself of some communication, thus addressed him,—

"My dear friend, I have learned now your story from Barlow, who called several times during your relapse, and who is the more anxious about you, as the time for the decision of your case now draws near. The sooner you quit this house the better."

"Quit this house! and why? Is there not one in this house to whom I owe my fortune and my life?"

"Yes; and for that reason I say, 'Go hence.' It is the only return you can make her."

"Pshaw! speak intelligibly."

"I will," said Liancourt, gravely. "I have been a watcher with her by your sick-bed, and I know what you must feel al-

ready; nay, I must confess that even the old servant has ventured to speak to me. You have inspired that poor girl with feelings dangerous to her peace."

"Ha!" cried Philip, with such joy that Liancourt frowned, and said, "Hitherto I have believed you too honourable to —"

"So you think she loves me?" interrupted Philip.

"Yes; what then? You, the heir of Beaufort Court, of a rental of £20,000 a year, of an historical name, — you cannot marry this poor girl?"

"Well! I will consider what you say, and, at all events, I will leave the house to attend the result of the trial. Let us talk no more on the subject now."

Philip had the penetration to perceive that Liancourt, who was greatly moved by the beauty, the innocence, and the unprotected position of Fanny, had not confined caution to himself; that with his characteristic well-meaning bluntness, and with the license of a man somewhat advanced in years, he had spoken to Fanny herself. For Fanny now seemed to shun Philip,—her eyes were heavy, her manner was embarrassed. He saw the change, but it did not grieve him; he hailed the omens which he drew from it.

And at last he and Liancourt went. He was absent three weeks, during which time the formality of the friendly lawsuit was decided in the plaintiff's favour; and the public were in ecstasies at the noble and sublime conduct of Mr. Robert Beaufort, who, the moment he had discovered a document which he might so easily have buried forever in oblivion, voluntarily agreed to dispossess himself of estates he had so long enjoyed, preferring conscience to lucre. Some persons observed that it was reported that Mr. Philip Beaufort had also been generous,—that he had agreed to give up the estates for his uncle's life, and was only in the meanwhile to receive a fourth of the revenues. But the universal comment was, "He could not have done less!" Mr. Robert Beaufort was, as Lord Lilburne had once observed, a man who was born, made, and reared to be spoken well of by the world; and it *was* a comfort to him now, poor man, to feel that his character was so highly estimated. If Philip should live to

the age of one hundred, he will never become so respectable and popular a man with the crowd as his worthy uncle. But does it much matter?

Philip returned to H—— the eve before the day fixed for the marriage of his brother and Camilla.

CHAPTER XXII.

*Νυκτὸς Αἰθέρτε καὶ Ἡμέρα ἐξεγέροντο.*¹ — HESIOD.

THE sun of early May shone cheerfully over the quiet suburb of H——. In the thoroughfares life was astir. It was the hour of noon, — the hour at which commerce is busy, and streets are full. The old retired trader, eying wistfully the rolling coach or the oft-pausing omnibus, was breathing the fresh and scented air in the broadest and most crowded road, from which, afar in the distance, rose the spires of the metropolis; the boy let loose from the day-school was hurrying home to dinner, his satchel on his back; the ballad-singer was sending her cracked whine through the obscurer alleys, where the baker's boy with puddings on his tray, and the smart maid-servant despatched for porter, paused to listen; and round the shops where cheap shawls and cottons tempted the female eye, many a loitering girl detained her impatient mother, and eyed the tickets and calculated her hard-gained savings for the Sunday gear; and in the corners of the streets steamed the itinerant kitchens of the pieman, and rose the sharp cry, "All hot! all hot!" in the ear of infant and ragged hunger; and amidst them all rolled on some lazy coach of ancient merchant or withered maiden, unconscious of any life but that creeping through their own languid veins; and before the house in which Catherine died, there loitered many stragglers, gossips of the hamlet, subscribers to the newsroom hard

¹ "From Night, Sunshine and Day arose!"

by, to guess and speculate and wonder why, from the church behind, there rose the merry peal of the marriage-bell!

At length along the broad road leading from the great city there were seen rapidly advancing three carriages of a very different fashion from those familiar to the suburb. On they came; swiftly they whirled round the angle that conducted to the church, — the hoofs of the gay steeds ringing cheerily on the ground, the white favours of the servants gleaming in the sun. Happy is the bride the sun shines on! And when the carriages had thus vanished, the scattered groups melted into one crowd, and took their way to the church. They stood idling without in the burial-ground, many of them round the fence that guarded from their footsteps Catherine's lonely grave. All in nature was glad, exhilarating, and yet serene; a genial freshness breathed through the soft air; not a cloud was to be seen in the smiling azure; even the old dark yews seemed happy in their everlasting verdure. The bell ceased, and then even the crowd grew silent; and not a sound was heard in that solemn spot to whose demesnes are consecrated alike the Birth, the Marriage, and the Death.

At length there came forth from the church-door the goodly form of a rosy beadle. Approaching the groups, he whispered the better-dressed and commanded the ragged, remonstrated with the old and lifted his cane against the young; and the result of all was, that the churchyard, not without many a murmur and expostulation, was cleared, and the crowd fell back in the space behind the gates of the principal entrance, where they swayed and gaped and chattered round the carriages, which were to bear away the bridal party.

Within the church, as the ceremony was now concluded, Philip Beaufort conducted, hand-in-hand, silently along the aisle his brother's wife.

Leaning on his stick, his cold sneer upon his thin lip, Lord Lilburne limped, step by step with the pair, though a little apart from them, glancing from moment to moment at the face of Philip Beaufort, where he had hoped to read a grief that he could not detect. Lord Lilburne had carefully refrained from an interview with Philip till that day, and

he now only came to the wedding as a surgeon goes to an hospital, to examine a disease he had been told would be great and sore: he was disappointed. Close behind followed Sidney, radiant with joy and bloom and beauty; and his kind guardian, the tears rolling down his eyes, murmured blessings as he looked upon him. Mrs. Beaufort had declined attending the ceremony, — her nerves were too weak; but, behind, at a longer interval, came Robert Beaufort, sober, staid, collected as ever to outward seeming; but a close observer might have seen that his eye had lost its habitual complacent cunning, that his step was more heavy, his stoop more joyless. About his air there was a something crestfallen. The consciousness of acres had passed away from his portly presence; he was no longer a possessor, but a pensioner. The rich man, who had decided as he pleased on the happiness of others, was a cipher; he had ceased to have any interest in anything. What to him the marriage of his daughter now? Her children would not be the heirs of Beaufort. As Camilla kindly turned round, and through happy tears waited for his approach to clasp his hand, he forced a smile; but it was sickly and piteous. He longed to creep away, and be alone.

"My father!" said Camilla, in her sweet low voice; and she extricated herself from Philip, and threw herself on his breast.

"She is a good child," said Robert Beaufort, vacantly, and, turning his dry eyes to the group, he caught instinctively at his customary commonplaces; "and a good child, Mr. Sidney, makes a good wife!"

The clergyman bowed as if the compliment were addressed to himself; he was the only man there whom Robert Beaufort could now deceive.

"My sister," said Philip Beaufort, as once more leaning on his arm, they paused before the church-door, "may Sidney love and prize you as — as I would have done; and believe me, both of you, I have no regret, no memory, that wounds me now."

He dropped the hand, and motioned to her father to lead her to the carriage. Then winding his arm into Sidney's, he said, —

"Wait till they are gone: I have one word yet with you. Go on, gentlemen."

The clergyman bowed, and walked through the churchyard. But Lilburne, pausing and surveying Philip Beaufort, said to him, whisperingly, —

"And so much for feeling, — the folly! So much for generosity, — the delusion! Happy man!"

"I *am* thoroughly happy, Lord Lilburne."

"Are you? Then, it was neither feeling nor generosity; and we were taken in! Good day." With that he limped slowly to the gate.

Philip answered not the sarcasm even by a look. For at that moment a loud shout was set up by the mob without, — they had caught a glimpse of the bride.

"Come, Sidney, this way," he said; "I must not detain you long."

Arm in arm they passed out of the church, and turned to the spot hard by, where the flowers smiled up to them from the stone on their mother's grave.

The old inscription had been effaced, and the name of CATHERINE BEAUFORT was placed upon the stone.

"Brother," said Philip, "do not forget this grave, years hence, when children play around your own hearth. Observe, the name of Catherine Beaufort is fresher on the stone than the dates of birth and death; the name was only inscribed there to-day, — *your* wedding-day. Brother, by this grave we are now indeed united."

"Oh, Philip!" cried Sidney, in deep emotion, clasping the hand stretched out to him, "I feel, I feel how noble, how great you are — that you have sacrificed more than I dreamed of —"

"Hush!" said Philip, with a smile. "No talk of this. I am happier than you deem me. Go back now, — she waits you."

"And you? Leave you! alone!"

"Not alone," said Philip, pointing to the grave.

Scarce had he spoken when, from the gate, came the shrill, clear voice of Lord Lilburne, —

"We wait for Mr. Sidney Beaufort."

Sidney passed his hand over his eyes, wrung the hand of his brother once more, and in a moment was by Camilla's side.

Another shout, the whirl of the wheels, the trampling of feet, the distant hum and murmur, — and all was still.

The clerk returned to lock up the church — he did not observe where Philip stood in the shadow of the wall — and went home to talk of the gay wedding, and inquire at what hour the funeral of a young woman, his next-door neighbour, would take place the next day.

It might be a quarter of an hour after Philip was thus left — nor had he moved from the spot — when he felt his sleeve pulled gently. He turned round and saw before him the wistful face of Fanny!

"So you would not come to the wedding?" said he.

"No. But I fancied you might be here alone, — and sad."

"And you will not even wear the dress I gave you?"

"Another time. Tell me, are you unhappy?"

"Unhappy, Fanny! No; look around. The very burial-ground has a smile. See the laburnums clustering over the wall, listen to the birds on the dark yews above, and yonder see even the butterfly has settled upon *her* grave! I am *not* unhappy." As he thus spoke, he looked at her earnestly, and taking both her hands in his, drew her gently towards him, and continued: "Fanny, do you remember, that, leaning over that gate, I once spoke to you of the happiness of marriage where two hearts are united? Nay, Fanny, nay, I must go on. It was here in this spot, it was here that I first saw you on my return to England. I came to seek the dead, and I have thought since it was my mother's guardian spirit that drew me hither to find *you*, — the living! And often afterwards, Fanny, you would come with me here, when, blinded and dull as I was, I came to brood and to repine, insensible of the treasures even then perhaps within my reach. But best as it was; the ordeal through which I have passed has made me more grateful for the prize I now dare to hope for. On this grave your hand daily renewed the flowers. By this grave, the link between the Time and the Eternity, whose

lessons we have read together, will you consent to record our vows? Fanny, dearest, fairest, tenderest, best, I love you, and at last as alone you *should* be loved! I woo you as my wife! Mine, not for a season, but forever, — forever, even when these graves are opened, and the World shrivels like a scroll. Do you understand me; do you heed me? — Or have I dreamed that that — ”

He stopped short; a dismay seized him at her silence. Had he been mistaken in his divine belief? The fear was momentary; for Fanny, who had recoiled as he spoke, now placing her hands to her temples, gazing on him, breathlessly and with lips apart, as if, indeed, with great effort and struggle her modest spirit conceived the possibility of the happiness that broke upon it, advanced timidly, her face suffused in blushes; and looking into his eyes as if she would read into his very soul, said, with an accent the intenseness of which showed that her whole fate hung on his answer, —

“But this is pity! They have told you that I — In short, you are generous — you — you — Oh, deceive me not! Do you love her still? Can you — do you love the humble, foolish Fanny?”

“As God shall judge me, sweet one, I am sincere! I have survived a passion, never so deep, so tender, so entire as that I now feel for you! And, oh, Fanny, hear this true confession. It was you — you to whom my heart turned before I saw Camilla! Against that impulse I struggled in the blindness of a haughty error!”

Fanny uttered a low and suppressed cry of delight and rapture. Philip passionately continued, —

“Fanny, make blessed the life you have saved. Fate destined us for each other; fate for me has ripened your sweet mind; fate for you has softened this rugged heart. We may have yet much to bear and much to learn. We will console and teach each other!”

He drew her to his breast as he spoke, — drew her trembling, blushing, confused, but no more reluctant; and there, by the GRAVE that had been so memorable a scene in their common history, were murmured those vows in which all this

world knows of human happiness is treasured and recorded, —love that takes the sting from grief and faith that gives eternity to love. All silent, yet all serene around them! Above, the heaven; at their feet, the grave, —for the love, the grave! for the faith, the heaven!

CHAPTER THE LAST.

A LABORE reclinat otium.¹ — HORACE.

I FEEL that there is some justice in the affection the general reader entertains for the old-fashioned and now somewhat obsolete custom of giving to him, at the close of a work, the latest news of those who sought his acquaintance through its progress.

The weak but well-meaning Smith, no more oppressed by the evil influence of his brother, has continued to pass his days in comfort and respectability on the income settled on him by Philip Beaufort. Mr. and Mrs. Roger Morton still live, and have just resigned their business to their eldest son, retiring themselves to a small villa adjoining the town in which they had made their fortune. Mrs. Morton is very apt, when she goes out to tea, to talk of her dear deceased sister-in-law, the late Mrs. Beaufort, and of her own remarkable kindness to her nephew when a little boy. She observes that, in fact, the young men owe everything to Mr. Roger and herself; and, indeed, though Sidney was never of a grateful disposition, and has not been near her since, yet the elder brother, *the* Mr. Beaufort, always evinces his respect to them by the yearly present of a fat buck. She then comments on the ups and downs of life; and observes that it is a pity her son Tom preferred the medical profession to the Church. Their cousin, Mr. Beaufort, has two livings. To all this Mr.

¹ "Leisure unbends itself from labour."

Roger says nothing, except an occasional "Thank Heaven, I want no man's help! I am as well to do as my neighbours. But that's neither here nor there."

There are some readers — they who do not thoroughly consider the truths of this life — who will yet ask, "But how is Lord Lilburne punished?" Punished? ay, and indeed, how? The world, and not the poet, must answer that question. Crime is punished from without. If Vice is punished, it must be from within. The Lilburnes of this hollow world are not to be pelted with the soft roses of poetical justice. They who ask why he is not punished may be the first to doff the hat to the equipage in which my lord lolls through the streets! The only offence he habitually committed of a nature to bring the penalties of detection he renounced the moment he perceived there was danger of discovery! he gambled no more after Philip's hint. He was one of those, some years after, most bitter upon a certain nobleman charged with unfair play; one of those who took the accusation as proved, and whose authority settled all disputes thereon.

But if no thunderbolt falls on Lord Lilburne's head, if he is fated still to eat and drink, and to die on his bed, he may yet taste the ashes of the Dead Sea fruit which his hands have culled. He is grown old. His infirmities increase upon him; his sole resources of pleasure — the senses — are dried up. For him there is no longer savour in the viands, or sparkle in the wine; man delights him not, nor woman neither. He is alone with Old Age, and in sight of Death.

With the exception of Simon, who died in his chair not many days after Sidney's marriage, Robert Beaufort is the only one among the more important agents left at the last scene of this history who has passed from our mortal stage. After the marriage of his daughter he for some time moped and drooped.

But Philip learned from Mr. Blackwell of the will that Robert had made previously to the lawsuit; and by which, had the lawsuit failed, his rights would yet have been preserved to him. Deeply moved by a generosity he could not have expected from his uncle, and not pausing to inquire too

closely how far it was to be traced to the influence of Arthur, Philip so warmly expressed his gratitude, and so surrounded Mr. Beaufort with affectionate attentions, that the poor man began to recover his self-respect; began even to regard the nephew he had so long dreaded as a son, — to forgive him for not marrying Camilla. And, perhaps, to his astonishment, an act in his life for which the customs of the world (that never favour natural ties not previously sanctioned by the legal) would have rather censured than praised, became his consolation, and the memory he was most proud to recall. He gradually recovered his spirits; he was very fond of looking over that will; he carefully preserved it; he even flattered himself that it was necessary to preserve Philip from all possible litigation hereafter, — for if the estates were not legally Philip's, why, then, they were *his* to dispose of as he pleased. He was never more happy than when his successor was by his side; and was certainly a more cheerful and, I doubt not, a better man during the few years in which he survived the lawsuit than ever he had been before. He died — still member for the county, and still quoted as a pattern to county members — in Philip's arms; and on his lips there was a smile that even Lilburne would have called sincere.

Mrs. Beaufort, after her husband's death, established herself in London, and could never be persuaded to visit Beaufort Court. She took a companion, who more than replaced in her eyes the absence of Camilla.

And Camilla, Spencer, Sidney? They live still by the gentle lake, happy in their own serene joys and graceful leisure; shunning alike ambition and its trials, action and its sharp vicissitudes; envying no one, covetous of nothing; making around them, in the working world, something of the old pastoral and golden holiday. If Camilla had at one time wavered in her allegiance to Sidney, her good and simple heart has long since been entirely regained by his devotion; and as might be expected from her disposition, she loved him better after marriage than before.

Philip had gone through severer trials than Sidney. But, had their earlier fates been reversed, and that spirit, in youth

so haughty and self-willed, been lapped in ease and luxury, would Philip now be a better or a happier man? Perhaps, too, for a less tranquil existence than his brother Philip yet may be reserved; but in proportion to the uses of our destiny, do we repose or toil: he who never knows pain knows but the half of pleasure. The lot of whatever is most noble on the earth below falls not amidst the rosy Gardens of the Epicurean. We may envy the man who enjoys and rests; but the smile of Heaven settles rather on the front of him who labours and aspires.

And did Philip ever regret the circumstances that had given him Fanny for the partner of his life? To some who take their notions of the Ideal from the conventional rules of romance rather than from their own perceptions of what is true, this narrative would have been more pleasing had Philip never loved but Fanny. But all that had led to that love had only served to render it more enduring and concentrated. Man's strongest and worthiest affection is his last; is the one that unites and embodies all his past dreams of what is excellent; the one from which Hope springs out the brighter from former disappointments; the one in which the MEMORIES are the most tender and the most abundant; the one which, replacing all others, nothing hereafter can replace.

And now, ere the scene closes, and the audience, whom perhaps the actors may have interested for a while, disperse, to forget amidst the pursuits of actual life the Shadows that have amused an hour, or beguiled a care, let the curtain fall on one happy picture.

It is some years after the marriage of Philip and Fanny. It is a summer morning. In a small old-fashioned room at Beaufort Court, with its casements open to the gardens, stood Philip, having just entered; and near the window sat Fanny, his boy by her side. She was at the mother's hardest task, — the first lessons to the first-born child; and as the boy looked up at her sweet earnest face with a smile of intelligence on his own, you might have seen at a glance how well understood were the teacher and the pupil. Yes; whatever

might have been wanting in the Virgin to the full development of mind, the cares of the Mother had supplied. When a being was born to lean on her alone, dependent on her providence for life, then hour after hour, step after step, in the progress of infant destinies, had the reason of the mother grown in the child's growth, adapting itself to each want that it must foresee, and taking its perfectness and completion from the breath of the New Love!

The child caught sight of Philip and rushed to embrace him.

"See!" whispered Fanny, as she also hung upon him, and strange recollections of her own mysterious childhood crowded upon her,— "see," whispered she, with a blush half of shame and half of pride, "the poor idiot girl is the teacher of your child!"

"And," answered Philip, "whether for child or mother, what teacher is like Love?"

Thus saying, he took the boy into his arms; and as he bent over those rosy cheeks, Fanny saw, from the movement of his lips and the moisture in his eyes, that he blessed God. He looked up on the mother's face, he glanced round on the flowers and foliage of the luxurious summer, and again he blessed God. And without and within, it was Light and MORNING!

THE END.

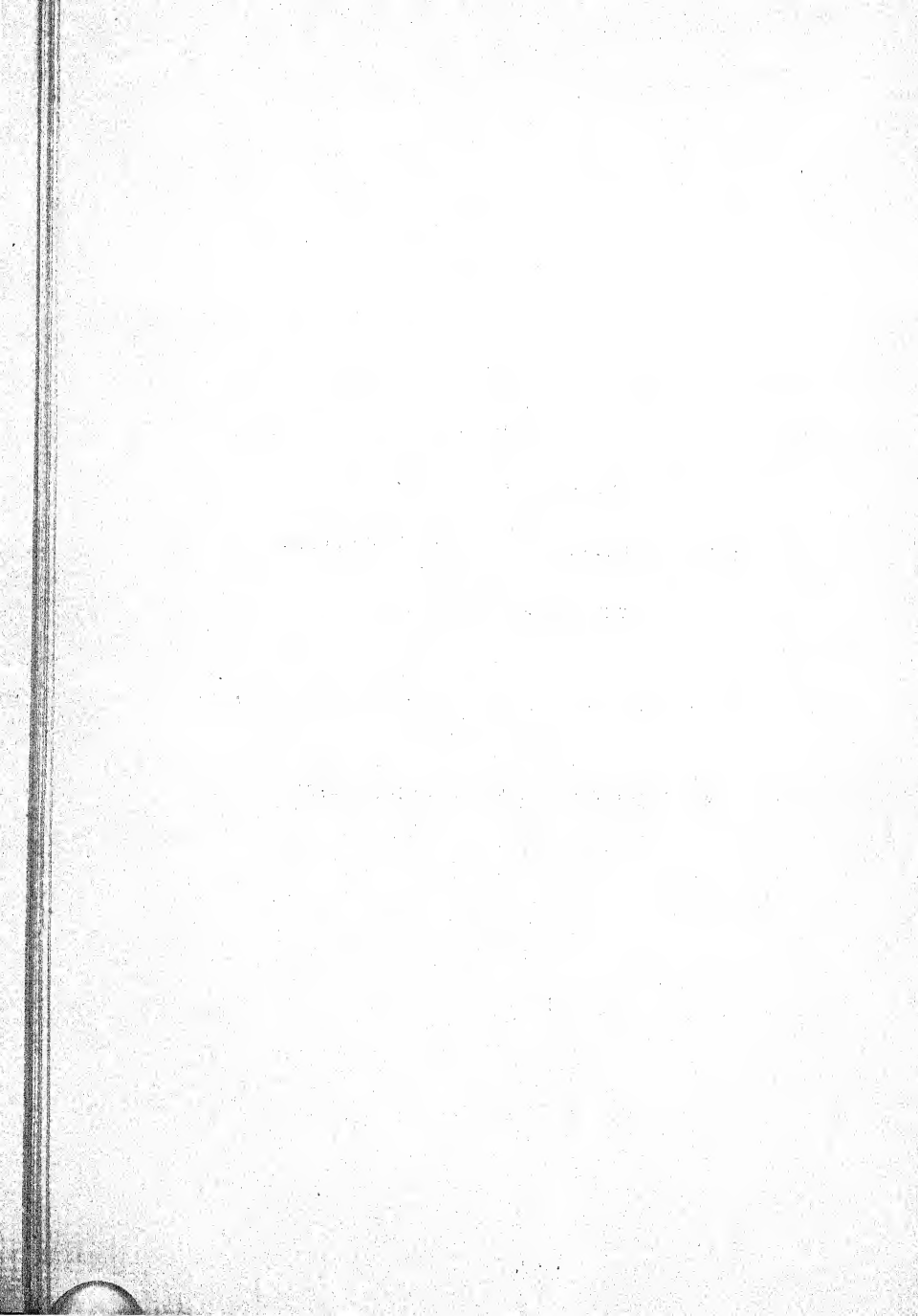
LEILA; OR, THE SIEGE OF GRANADA

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON,

This Tale is Dedicated,

BY ONE
WHO WISHES HE COULD HAVE FOUND A MORE DURABLE MONUMENT
WHEREON TO ENGRAVE

A MEMORIAL OF REAL FRIENDSHIP.



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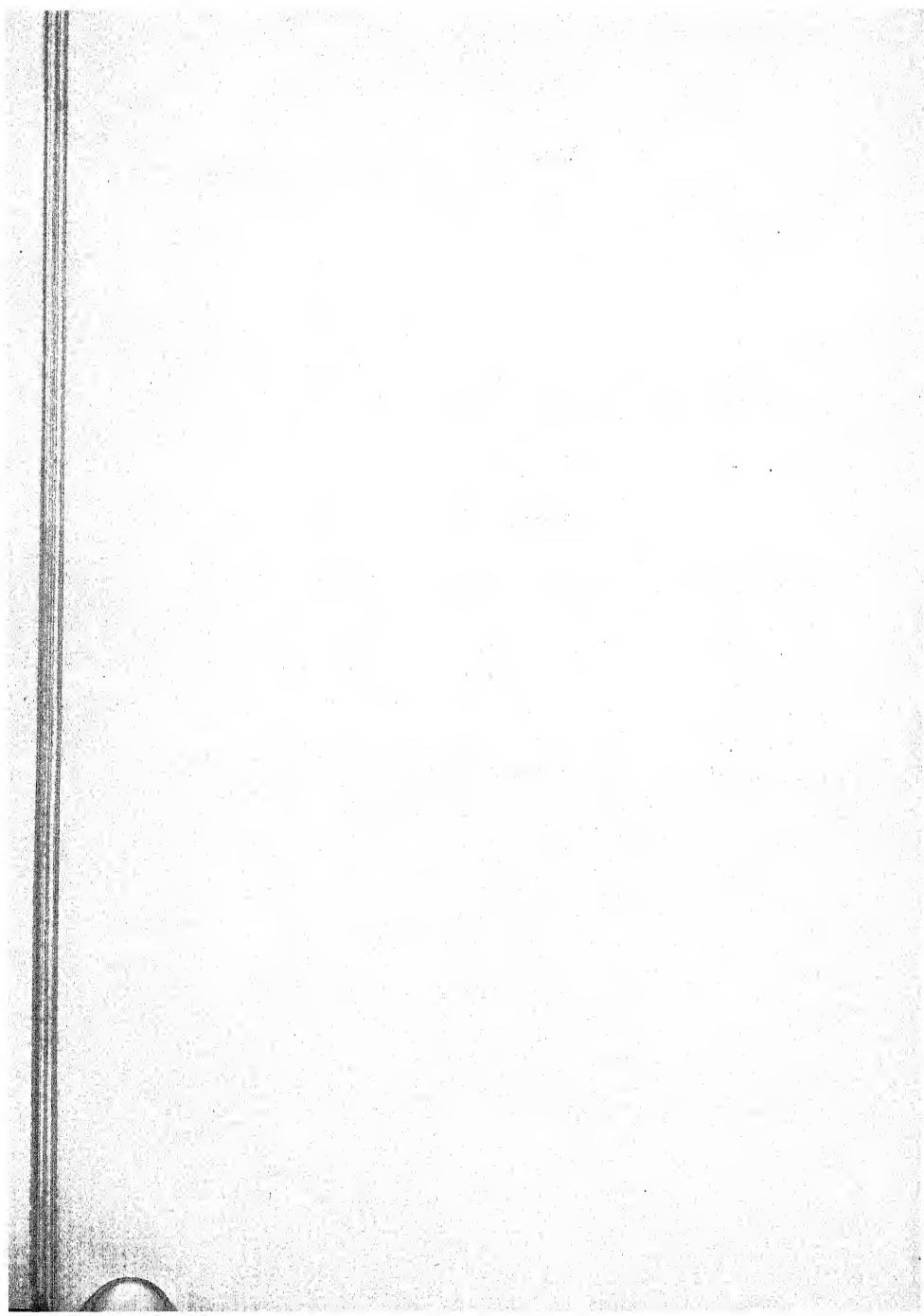
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LEILA;

OR,

THE SIEGE OF GRANADA.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

THE ENCHANTER AND THE WARRIOR.

It was the summer of the year 1491, and the armies of Ferdinand and Isabel invested the city of Granada.

The night was not far advanced; and the moon, which broke through the transparent air of Andalusia, shone calmly over the immense and murmuring encampment of the Spanish foe, and touched with a hazy light the snow-capped summits of the Sierra Nevada, contrasting the verdure and luxuriance which no devastation of man could utterly sweep from the beautiful vale below.

In the streets of the Moorish city many a group still lingered. Some, as if unconscious of the beleaguering war without, were listening in quiet indolence to the strings of the Moorish lute or the lively tale of an Arabian improvisator; others were conversing with such eager and animated gestures as no ordinary excitement could wring from the stately calm habitual to every Oriental people. But the more public places, in which gathered these different groups, only the more impressively heightened the desolate and solemn repose that brooded over the rest of the city.

At this time a man, with downcast eyes, and arms folded within the sweeping gown which descended to his feet, was

seen passing through the streets, alone, and apparently unobserved of all around him. Yet this indifference was by no means shared by the struggling crowds through which, from time to time, he musingly swept.

"God is great!" said one man; "it is the Enchanter Almamen."

"He hath locked up the manhood of Boabdil el Chico with the key of his spells," quoth another, stroking his beard; "I would curse him, if I dared."

"But they say that he hath promised that when man fails, the genii will fight for Granada," observed a third, doubtingly.

"Allah Akbar! what is, is; what shall be, shall be!" said a fourth, with all the solemn sagacity of a prophet.

Whatever their feelings, whether of awe or execration, terror or hope, each group gave way as Almamen passed, and hushed the murmurs not intended for his ear. Passing through the Zacatin (the street which traversed the Great Bazaar), the reputed enchanter ascended a narrow and winding street, and arrived at last before the walls that encircled the palace and fortress of the Alhambra.

The sentry at the gate saluted and admitted him in silence; and in a few moments his form was lost in the solitude of groves, amidst which at frequent openings the spray of Arabian fountains glittered in the moonlight; while above rose the castled heights of the Alhambra; and on the right, those Vermilion Towers whose origin veils itself in the farthest ages of Phœnician enterprise.

Almamen paused, and surveyed the scene. "Was Aden more lovely?" he muttered; "and shall so fair a spot be trodden by the victor Nazarene? What matters? Creed chases creed, race, race, until time comes back to its starting-place, and beholds the reign restored to the eldest faith and the eldest tribe. The horn of our strength shall be exalted."

At these thoughts the seer relapsed into silence, and gazed long and intently upon the stars, as, more numerous and brilliant with every step of the advancing night, their rays broke on the playful waters, and tinged with silver the various and breathless foliage. So earnest was his gaze, and so absorbed

his thoughts, that he did not perceive the approach of a Moor, whose glittering weapons and snow-white turban, rich with emeralds, cast a gleam through the wood.

The new-comer was above the common size of his race, — generally small and spare, — but without attaining the lofty stature and large proportions of the more redoubted of the warriors of Spain. But in his presence and mien there was something which, in the haughtiest conclave of Christian chivalry, would have seemed to tower and command. He walked with a step at once light and stately, as if it spurned the earth; and in the carriage of the small erect head and stag-like throat there was that indefinable and imposing dignity which accords so well with our conception of a heroic lineage and a noble though imperious spirit. The stranger approached Almamen, and paused abruptly when within a few steps of the enchanter. He gazed upon him in silence for some moments; and when at length he spoke, it was with a cold and sarcastic tone.

"Pretender to the dark secrets," said he, "is it in the stars that thou art reading those destinies of men and nations which the Prophet wrought by the chieftain's brain and the soldier's arm?"

"Prince," replied Almamen, turning slowly, and recognizing the intruder on his meditations, "I was but considering how many revolutions, which have shaken earth to its centre, those orbs have witnessed, unsympathizing and unchanged."

"Unsympathizing!" repeated the Moor, — "yet thou believest in their effect upon the earth?"

"You wrong me," answered Almamen, with a slight smile; "you confound your servant with that vain race, the astrologers."

"I deemed astrology a part of the science of the two angels, Harût and Marût."¹

"Possibly; but I know not that science, though I have wandered at midnight by the ancient Babel."

¹ The science of magic. It was taught by the angels named in the text; for which offence they are still supposed to be confined to the ancient Babel. There they may yet be consulted, though they are rarely seen (*Yallal' odin Yahya*). — SALE: *Koran*.

"Fame lies to us, then," answered the Moor, with some surprise.

"Fame never made pretence to truth," said Almamen, calmly, and proceeding on his way. "Allah be with you, prince; I seek the king."

"Stay! I have just quitted his presence, and left him, I trust, with thoughts worthy of the sovereign of Granada, which I would not have disturbed by a stranger, a man whose arms are not spear nor shield."

"Noble Muza," returned Almamen, "fear not that my voice will weaken the inspirations which thine hath breathed into the breast of Boabdil. Alas! if my counsel were heeded, thou wouldst hear the warriors of Granada talk less of Muza, and more of the king. But Fate, or Allah, hath placed upon the throne of a tottering dynasty one who, though brave, is weak, though wise, a dreamer; and you suspect the adviser when you find the influence of nature on the advised. Is this just?"

Muza gazed long and sternly on the face of Almamen; then, putting his hand gently on the enchanter's shoulder, he said, —

"Stranger, if thou playest us false, think that this arm hath cloven the casque of many a foe, and will not spare the turban of a traitor!"

"And think thou, proud prince," returned Almamen, unquailing, "that I answer alone to Allah for my motives, and that against man my deeds I can defend!"

With these words the enchanter drew his long robe round him, and disappeared amidst the foliage.

CHAPTER II.

THE KING WITHIN HIS PALACE.

IN one of those apartments, the luxury of which is known only to the inhabitants of a genial climate (half chamber and half grotto), reclined a young Moor, in a thoughtful and musing attitude.

The ceiling of cedar-wood, glowing with gold and azure, was supported by slender shafts of the whitest alabaster, between which were open arcades light and graceful as the arched vineyards of Italy, and wrought in that delicate filigree-work common to the Arabian architecture; through these arcades was seen at intervals the lapsing fall of waters, lighted by alabaster lamps, and their tinkling music sounded with a fresh and regular murmur upon the ear. The whole of one side of this apartment was open to a broad and extensive balcony, which overhung the banks of the winding and moonlit Darro; and in the clearness of the soft night might be distinctly seen the undulating hills, the woods and orange-groves, which still form the unrivalled landscapes of Granada.

The pavement was spread with ottomans and couches of the richest azure, prodigally enriched with quaint designs in broideries of gold and silver; and over that on which the Moor reclined, facing the open balcony, were suspended on a pillar the round shield, the light javelin, and the curving cimier of Moorish warfare. So studded were these arms with jewels of rare cost that they might alone have sufficed to indicate the rank of the evident owner, even if his own gorgeous vestments had not betrayed it. An open manuscript on a silver table lay unread before the Moor as, leaning his face upon his hand, he looked with abstracted eyes along the mountain summits dimly distinguished from the cloudless and far horizon.

No one could have gazed without a vague emotion of interest, mixed with melancholy, upon the countenance of the inmate of that luxurious chamber.

Its beauty was singularly stamped with a grave and stately sadness, which was made still more impressive by its air of youth and the unwonted fairness of the complexion. Unlike the attributes of the Moorish race, the hair and curling beard were of a deep golden colour; and on the broad forehead and in the large eyes was that settled and contemplative mildness which rarely softens the swart lineaments of the fiery children of the sun. Such was the personal appearance of Boabdil el Chico, the last of the Moorish dynasty in Spain.

"These scrolls of Arabian learning," said Boabdil to himself, "what do they teach? To despise wealth and power, to hold the heart to be the true empire. This, then, is wisdom. Yet if I follow these maxims am I wise? Alas! the whole world would call me a driveller and a madman. Thus is it ever; the wisdom of the Intellect fills us with precepts which it is the wisdom of Action to despise. O Holy Prophet, what fools men would be, if their knavery did not eclipse their folly!"

The young king listlessly threw himself back on his cushions as he uttered these words, too philosophical for a king whose crown sat so loosely on his brow.

After a few moments of thought that appeared to dissatisfy and disquiet him, Boabdil again turned impatiently round. "My soul wants the bath of music," said he; "these journeys into a pathless realm have wearied it, and the streams of sound supple and relax the travailed pilgrim."

He clapped his hands, and from one of the arcades a boy, hitherto invisible, started into sight; at a slight and scarce perceptible sign from the king the boy again vanished, and in a few moments afterwards, glancing through the fairy pillars and by the glittering waterfalls, came the small and twinkling feet of the maids of Araby. As with their transparent tunics and white arms they gleamed, without an echo, through that cool and voluptuous chamber, they might well have seemed the Peris of the Eastern magic, summoned to

beguile the sated leisure of a youthful Solomon. With them came a maiden of more exquisite beauty, though smaller stature, than the rest, bearing the light Moorish lute; and a faint and languid smile broke over the beautiful face of Boabdil as his eyes rested upon her graceful form and the dark yet glowing lustre of her Oriental countenance. She alone approached the king, timidly kissed his hand, and then, joining her comrades, commenced the following song, to the air and very words of which the feet of the dancing-girls kept time, while with the chorus rang the silver bells of the musical instrument which each of the dancers carried.

AMINE'S SONG.

I.

Softly, oh, softly glide,
Gentle Music, thou silver tide,
Bearing, the lulled air along,
This leaf from the Rose of Song!
To its port in his soul let it float,
The frail but the fragrant boat, —
Bear it, soft Air, along!

II.

With the burthen of sound we are laden,
Like the bells on the trees of Aden,¹
When they thrill with a tinkling tone
At the Wind from the Holy Throne.
Hark, as we move around,
We shake off the buds of sound:
Thy presence, Beloved, is Aden.

III.

Sweet chime that I hear and wake,
I would, for my loved one's sake,
That I were a sound like thee,
To the depths of his heart to flee.
If my breath had his senses blest,
If my voice in his heart could rest,
What pleasure to die like thee!

¹ The Mohammedans believe that musical bells hang on the trees of Paradise, and are put in motion by a wind from the throne of God.

The music ceased; the dancers remained motionless in their graceful postures, as if arrested into statues of alabaster; and the young songstress cast herself on a cushion at the feet of the monarch, and looked up fondly, but silently, into his yet melancholy eyes, when a man, whose entrance had not been noticed, was seen to stand within the chamber.

He was about the middle stature, lean, muscular, and strongly though sparely built. A plain black robe, something in the fashion of the Armenian gown, hung long and loosely over a tunic of bright scarlet, girded by a broad belt, from the centre of which was suspended a small golden key, while at the left side appeared the jewelled hilt of a crooked dagger. His features were cast in a larger and grander mould than was common among the Moors of Spain: the forehead was broad, massive, and singularly high, and the dark eyes were of unusual size and brilliancy; his beard, short, black, and glossy, curled upward, and concealed all the lower part of the face, save a firm, compressed, and resolute expression in the lips, which were large and full; the nose was high, aquiline, and well-shaped; and the whole character of the head (which was, for symmetry, on too large and gigantic a scale as proportioned to the form) was indicative of extraordinary energy and power. At the first glance, the stranger might have seemed scarce on the borders of middle age; but on a more careful examination, the deep lines and wrinkles, marked on the forehead and round the eyes, betrayed a more advanced period of life. With arms folded on his breast, he stood by the side of the king, waiting in silence the moment when his presence should be perceived.

He did not wait long; the eyes and gesture of the girl nestled at the feet of Boabdil drew the king's attention to the spot where the stranger stood. His eye brightened when it fell upon him.

"Almamen," cried Boabdil, eagerly, "you are welcome." As he spoke, he motioned to the dancing-girls to withdraw.

"May I not rest? O core of my heart, thy bird is in its home," murmured the songstress at the king's feet.

"Sweet Amine," answered Boabdil, tenderly smoothing

down her ringlets as he bent to kiss her brow, "you should witness only my hours of delight. Toil and business have nought with thee; I will join thee ere yet the nightingale hymns his last music to the moon." Amine sighed, rose, and vanished with her companions.

"My friend," said the king, when alone with Almamen, "your counsels often soothe me into quiet, yet in such hours quiet is a crime. But what do? How struggle, — how act? Alas! at the hour of his birth, rightly did they affix to the name of Boabdil the epithet of *El Zogoybi*.¹ Misfortune set upon my brow her dark and fated stamp ere yet my lips could shape a prayer against her power. My fierce father, whose frown was as the frown of Azrael, hated me in my cradle; in my youth my name was invoked by rebels against my will; imprisoned by my father, with the poison-bowl or the dagger hourly before my eyes, I was saved only by the artifice of my mother. When age and infirmity broke the iron sceptre of the king, my claims to the throne were set aside, and my uncle, El Zagal, usurped my birthright. Amidst open war and secret treason I wrestled for my crown; and now, the sole sovereign of Granada, when, as I fondly imagined, my uncle had lost all claim on the affections of my people by succumbing to the Christian king and accepting a fief under his dominion, I find that the very crime of El Zagal is fixed upon me by my unhappy subjects, — that they deem he would not have yielded but for my supineness. At the moment of my delivery from my rival, I am received with execration by my subjects, and, driven into this my fortress of the Alhambra, dare not venture to head my armies or to face my people; yet am I called weak and irresolute, when strength and courage are forbid me. And as the water glides from yonder rock, that hath no power to retain it, I see the tide of empire welling from my hands."

The young king spoke warmly and bitterly, and in the irritation of his thoughts strode, while he spoke, with rapid and irregular strides along the chamber. Almamen marked his emotion with an eye and a lip of rigid composure.

¹ The unlucky.

"Light of the faithful," said he, when Boabdil had concluded, "the powers above never doom man to perpetual sorrow nor perpetual joy. The cloud and the sunshine are alike essential to the heaven of our destinies; and if thou hast suffered in thy youth, thou hast exhausted the calamities of fate, and thy manhood will be glorious, and thine age serene."

"Thou speakest as if the armies of Ferdinand were not already around my walls," said Boabdil, impatiently.

"The armies of Sennacherib were as mighty," answered Almamen.

"Wise seer," returned the king, in a tone half sarcastic and half solemn, "we, the Mussulmans of Spain, are not the blind fanatics of the Eastern world. On us have fallen the lights of philosophy and science; and if the more clear-sighted among us yet outwardly reverence the forms and fables worshipped by the multitude, it is from the wisdom of policy, not the folly of belief. Talk not to me, then, of thine examples of the ancient and elder creeds; the agents of God for this world are now, at least, in men, not angels; and if I wait till Ferdinand share the destiny of Sennacherib, I wait only till the Standard of the Cross wave above the Vermilion Towers."

"Yet," said Almamen, "while my lord the king rejects the fanaticism of belief, doth he reject the fanaticism of persecution? You disbelieve the stories of the Hebrews, yet you suffer the Hebrews themselves, that ancient and kindred Arabian race, to be ground to the dust, condemned and tortured by your judges, your informers, your soldiers, and your subjects."

"The base misers, they deserve their fate," answered Boabdil, loftily. "Gold is their god, and the market-place their country. Amidst the tears and groans of nations, they sympathize only with the rise and fall of trade; and, the thieves of the universe, while their hand is against every man's coffer, why wonder that they provoke the hand of every man against their throats? Worse than the tribe of Hanifa, who eat their god only in time of famine,¹ the race

¹ The tribe of Hanifa worshipped a lump of dough.

of Moisa¹ would sell the Seven Heavens for the dent² on the back of the date-stone."

"Your laws leave them no ambition but that of avarice," replied Almamen; "and as the plant will crook and distort its trunk, to raise its head through every obstacle to the sun, so the mind of man twists and perverts itself, if legitimate openings are denied it, to find its natural element in the gale of power or the sunshine of esteem. These Hebrews were not traffickers and misers in their own sacred land when they routed your ancestors, the Arab armies of old, and gnawed the flesh from their bones in famine rather than yield a weaker city than Granada to a mightier force than the holiday lords of Spain. Let this pass. My lord rejects the belief in the agencies of the angels; doth he still retain belief in the wisdom of mortal men?"

"Yes," returned Boabdil, quickly; "for of the one I know nought; of the other, mine own senses can be the judge. Almamen, my fiery kinsman, Muza, hath this evening been with me. He hath urged me to reject the fears of my people, which chain my panting spirit within these walls; he hath urged me to gird on yonder shield and cimeter, and to appear in the Vivarrambla, at the head of the nobles of Granada. My heart leaps high at the thought; and if I cannot live, at least I will die — a king!"

"It is nobly spoken," said Almamen, coldly.

"You approve, then, my design?"

"The friends of the king cannot approve the ambition of the king to die."

"Ha!" said Boabdil, in an altered voice, "thou thinkest, then, that I am doomed to perish in this struggle?"

"As the hour shall be chosen, wilt thou fall or triumph?"

"And that hour?"

"Is not yet come."

"Dost thou read the hour in the stars?"

"Let Moorish seers cultivate that frantic credulity; thy servant sees but in the stars worlds mightier than this little

¹ Moisa, Moses.

² A proverb used in the Koran, signifying the smallest possible trifle.

earth, whose light would neither wane nor wink if earth itself were swept from the infinities of space."

"Mysterious man," said Boabdil, "whence, then, is thy power? Whence thy knowledge of the future?"

Almamen approached the king, as he now stood by the open balcony.

"Behold," said he, pointing to the waters of the Darro, "yonder stream is of an element in which man cannot live nor breathe. Above, in the thin and impalpable air, our steps cannot find a footing, the armies of all earth cannot build an empire. And yet, by the exercise of a little art, the fishes and the birds, the inhabitants of the air and the water, minister to our most humble wants, the most common of our enjoyments. So it is with the true science of enchantment. Thinkest thou that, while the petty surface of the world is crowded with living things, there is no life in the vast centre within the earth, and the immense ether that surrounds it? As the fisherman snares his prey, as the fowler entraps the bird, so, by the art and genius of our human mind, we may thrall and command the subtler beings of realms and elements which our material bodies cannot enter, our gross senses cannot survey. This, then, is my lore. Of other worlds know I nought; but of the things of this world, whether men, or, as your legends term them, ghouls and genii, I have learned something. To the future, I myself am blind; but I can invoke and conjure up those whose eyes are more piercing, whose natures are more gifted."

"Prove to me thy power," said Boabdil, awed less by the words than by the thrilling voice and the impressive aspect of the enchanter.

"Is not the king's will my law?" answered Almamen. "Be his will obeyed. To-morrow night I await thee."

"Where?"

Almamen paused a moment, and then whispered a sentence in the king's ear. Boabdil started, and turned pale.

"A fearful spot!"

"So is the Alhambra itself, great Boabdil, while Ferdinand is without the walls, and Muza within the city."

"Muza! Darest thou mistrust my bravest warrior?"

"What wise king will trust the idol of the king's army? Did Boabdil fall to-morrow, by a chance javelin, in the field, whom would the nobles and the warriors place upon his throne? Doth it require an enchanter's lore to whisper to thy heart the answer in the name of 'Muza'?"

"O wretched state! O miserable king!" exclaimed Boabdil, in a tone of great anguish. "I never had a father, — I have now no people; a little while, and I shall have no country. Am I never to have a friend?"

"A friend, — what king ever had?" returned Almamen, dryly.

"Away, man, away!" cried Boabdil, as the impatient spirit of his rank and race shot dangerous fire from his eyes; "your cold and bloodless wisdom freezes up all the veins of my manhood! Glory, confidence, human sympathy, and feeling, — your counsels annihilate them all. Leave me; I would be alone."

"We meet to-morrow at midnight, mighty Boabdil," said Almamen, with his usual unmoved and passionless tones. "May the king live forever!"

The king turned, but his monitor had already disappeared. He went as he came, — noiseless and sudden as a ghost.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOVERS.

WHEN Muza parted from Almamen, he bent his steps towards the hill that rises opposite the ascent crowned with the towers of the Alhambra, the sides and summit of which eminence were tenanted by the luxurious population of the city. He selected the more private and secluded paths; and, half way up the hill, arrived at last before a low wall of considerable extent, which girded the gardens of some wealthier inhabitant of the city. He looked long and anxiously round.

All was solitary, nor was the stillness broken save as an occasional breeze from the snowy heights of the Sierra Nevada rustled the fragrant leaves of the citron and pomegranate, or as the silver tinkling of waterfalls chimed melodiously within the gardens. The Moor's heart beat high. A moment more, and he had scaled the wall, and found himself upon a green-sward, variegated by the rich colours of many a sleeping flower, and shaded by groves and alleys of luxuriant foliage and golden fruits.

It was not long before he stood beside a house that seemed of a construction anterior to the Moorish dynasty. It was built over low cloisters formed by heavy and time-worn pillars, concealed for the most part by a profusion of roses and creeping shrubs; the lattices above the cloisters opened upon large gilded balconies, — the superaddition of Moriscan taste. In one only of the casements a lamp was visible; the rest of the mansion was dark, as if, save in that chamber, sleep kept watch over the inmates. It was to this window that the Moor stole; and after a moment's pause he murmured rather than sang, so low and whispered was his voice, the following simple verses, slightly varied from an old Arabian poet: —

SERENADE.

Light of my soul, arise, arise,
 Thy sister lights are in the skies!
 We want thine eyes,
 Thy joyous eyes;
 The Night is mourning for thine eyes!

The sacred verse is on my sword,
 But on my heart thy name;
 The words on each alike adored,
 The truth of each the same.
 The same, — alas! too well I feel
 The heart is truer than the steel.

Light of my soul, upon me shine!
 Night wakes her stars to envy mine.
 Those eyes of thine,
 Wild eyes of thine,
 What stars are like those eyes of thine?

As he concluded, the lattice softly opened, and a female form appeared on the balcony.

"Ah, Leila!" said the Moor, "I see thee, and I am blessed!"

"Hush!" answered Leila, "speak low, nor tarry long; I fear that our interviews are suspected. And this," she added, in a trembling voice, "may perhaps be the last time we shall meet."

"Holy Prophet!" exclaimed Muza, passionately, "what do I hear? Why this mystery? Why cannot I learn thine origin, thy rank, thy parents? Think you, beautiful Leila, that Granada holds a house lofty enough to disdain the alliance with Muza Ben Abil Gazan? And oh," he added, sinking the haughty tones of his voice into accents of the softest tenderness, "if not too high to scorn me, what should war against our loves and our bridals? For worn equally on my heart were the flower of thy sweet self, whether the mountain top or the valley gave birth to the odour and the bloom."

"Alas!" answered Leila, weeping, "the mystery thou complainest of is as dark to myself as thee. How often have I told thee that I know nothing of my birth or childish fortunes, save a dim memory of a more distant and burning clime, where, amidst sands and wastes, springs the everlasting cedar, and the camel grazes on stunted herbage withering in the fiery air? Then it seemed to me that I had a mother: fond eyes looked on me, and soft songs hushed me into sleep."

"Thy mother's soul has passed into mine," said the Moor, tenderly.

Leila continued: "Borne hither, I passed from childhood into youth within these walls. Slaves minister to my slightest wish; and those who have seen both state and poverty, which I have not, tell me that treasures and splendour that might glad a monarch are prodigalized around me. But of ties and kindred know I little; my father, a stern and silent man, visits me but rarely, — sometimes months pass, and I see him not; but I feel he loves me. And till I knew thee, Muza, my brightest hours were in listening to the footsteps and flying to the arms of that solitary friend."

"Know you not his name?"

"Nor I, nor any one of the household, save perhaps Ximen, the chief of the slaves, — an old and withered man, whose very eye chills me into fear and silence."

"Strange," said the Moor, musingly. "Yet why think you our love is discovered, or can be thwarted?"

"Hush! Ximen sought me this day. 'Maiden,' said he, 'men's footsteps have been tracked within the gardens: if your sire know this, you will have looked your last on Granada. Learn,' he added, in a softer voice, as he saw me tremble, 'that permission were easier given to thee to wed the wild tiger than to mate with the loftiest noble of Morisca. Beware!' He spoke, and left me. Oh, Muza," she continued, passionately wringing her hands, "my heart sinks within me, and omen and doom rise dark before my sight!"

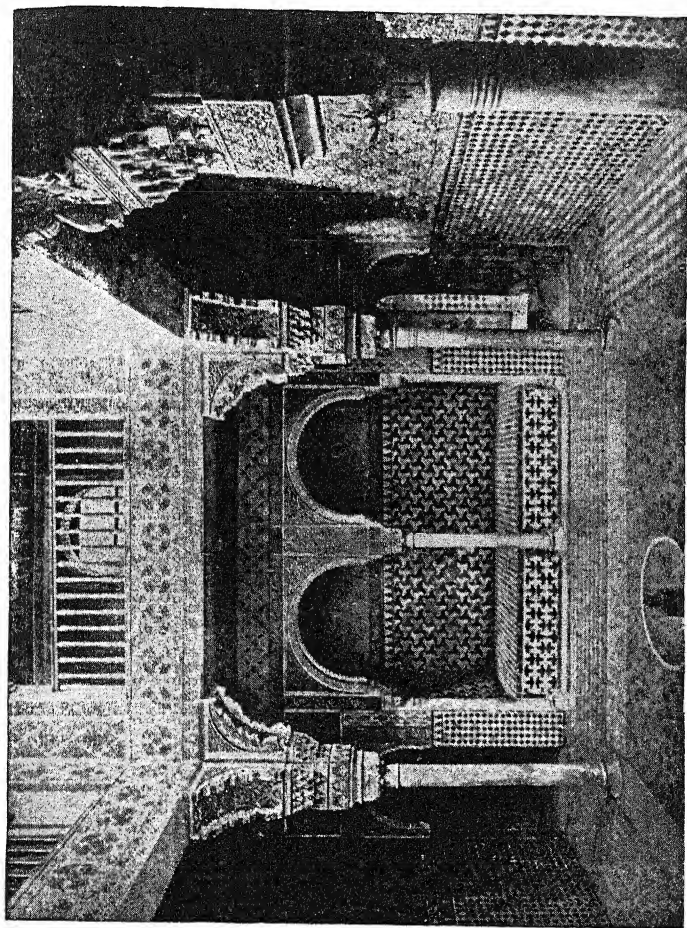
"By my father's head, these obstacles but fire my love; and I would scale to thy possession, though every step in the ladder were the corpses of a hundred foes!"

Scarcely had the fiery and high-souled Moor uttered his boast, than, from some unseen hand amidst the groves, a javelin whirred past him, and as the air it raised came sharp upon his cheek, half buried its quivering shaft in the trunk of a tree behind him.

"Fly, fly, and save thyself! O God, protect him!" cried Leila; and she vanished within the chamber.

The Moor did not wait the result of a deadlier aim; he turned, — yet, in the instinct of his fierce nature, not from, but against, the foe; his drawn cimeter in his hand, the half-suppressed cry of wrath trembling on his lips, he sprang forward in the direction whence the javelin had sped. With eyes accustomed to the ambuscades of Moorish warfare, he searched eagerly, yet warily, through the dark and sighing foliage. No sign of life met his gaze; and at length, grimly and reluctantly he retraced his steps and quitted the demesnes: but just as he had cleared the wall a voice — low, but sharp and shrill — came from the gardens.

"Thou art spared," it said, "but haply for a more miserable doom!"



HALL OF THE DIVANS, THE ALHAMBRA.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

THE chamber into which Leila retreated bore out the character she had given of the interior of her home. The fashion of its ornament and decoration was foreign to that adopted by the Moors of Granada; it had a more massive and, if we may use the term, *Egyptian* gorgeousness. The walls were covered with the stuffs of the East, stiff with gold, embroidered upon ground of the deepest purple; strange characters, apparently in some foreign tongue, were wrought in the tessellated cornices and on the heavy ceiling, which was supported by square pillars, round which were twisted serpents of gold and enamel, with eyes to which enormous emeralds gave a green and lifelike glare; various scrolls and musical instruments lay scattered upon marble tables, and a solitary lamp of burnished silver cast a dim and subdued light around the chamber. The effect of the whole, though splendid, was gloomy, strange, and oppressive, and rather suited to the thick and cave-like architecture which of old protected the inhabitants of Thebes and Memphis from the rays of the African sun, than to the transparent heaven and light pavilions of the graceful Orientals of Granada.

Leila stood within this chamber, pale and breathless, with her lips apart, her hands clasped, her very soul in her ears; nor was it possible to conceive a more perfect ideal of some delicate and brilliant Peri, captured in the palace of a hostile and gloomy Genius. Her form was of the lightest shape consistent with the roundness of womanly beauty, and there was something in it of that elastic and fawnlike grace which a sculptor seeks to embody in his dreams of a being more ærial than those of earth. Her luxuriant hair was dark indeed, but a purple and glossy hue redeemed it from that heaviness of shade too common in the tresses of the Asiatics; and her

complexion, naturally pale, but clear and lustrous, would have been deemed fair even in the North. Her features, slightly aquiline, were formed in the rarest mould of symmetry, and her full rich lips disclosed teeth that might have shamed the pearl. But the chief charm of that exquisite countenance was in an expression of softness and purity and intellectual sentiment that seldom accompanies that cast of loveliness, and was wholly foreign to the voluptuous and dreamy languor of Moorish maidens. Leila had been educated, and the statue had received a soul.

After a few minutes of intense suspense, she again stole to the lattice, gently unclosed it, and looked forth. Far, through an opening amidst the trees, she descried for a single moment the erect and stately figure of her lover darkening the moonshine on the sward, as now, quitting his fruitless search, he turned his lingering gaze towards the lattice of his beloved. The thick and interlacing foliage quickly hid him from her eyes; but Leila had seen enough; she turned within, and said, as grateful tears trickled down her cheeks, and she sank on her knees upon the piled cushions of the chamber, "God of my fathers, I bless thee, — he is safe!"

"And yet," she added, as a painful thought crossed her, "how may I pray for him? We kneel not to the same divinity, and I have been taught to loathe and shudder at his creed. Alas! how will this end? Fatal was the hour when he first beheld me in yonder gardens; more fatal still the hour in which he crossed the barrier, and told Leila that she was beloved by the hero whose arm was the shelter, whose name is the blessing, of Granada. Ah me, ah me!"

The young maiden covered her face with her hands, and sank into a passionate revery, broken only by her sobs. Some time had passed in this undisturbed indulgence of her grief, when the arras was gently put aside, and a man of remarkable garb and mien advanced into the chamber, pausing as he beheld her dejected attitude, and gazing on her with a look in which pity and tenderness seemed to struggle against habitual severity and sternness.

"Leila," said the intruder.

Leila started, and a deep blush suffused her countenance; she dashed the tears from her eyes, and came forward with a vain attempt to smile.

"My father, welcome!"

The stranger seated himself on the cushions, and motioned Leila to his side.

"These tears are fresh upon thy cheek," said he, gravely; "they are the witness of thy race. Our daughters are born to weep, and our sons to groan; ashes are on the head of the mighty, and the Fountains of the Beautiful run with gall! Oh that we could but struggle, that we could but dare, that we could raise up our heads, and unite against the bondage of the evil-doer! It may not be; but one man shall avenge a nation!"

The dark face of Leila's father, well fitted to express powerful emotion, became terrible in its wrath and passion; his brow and lip worked convulsively. But the paroxysm was brief; and scarce could she shudder at its intensity ere it had subsided into calm.

"Enough of these thoughts, which thou, a woman and a child, art not formed to witness. Leila, thou hast been nurtured with tenderness, and schooled with care. Harsh and unloving may I have seemed to thee, but I would have shed the best drops of my heart to save thy young years from a single pang. Nay, listen to me silently. That thou mightest one day be worthy of thy race, and that thine hours might not pass in indolent and weary lassitude, thou hast been taught the lessons of a knowledge rarely given to thy sex. Not thine the lascivious arts of the Moorish maidens; not thine their harlot songs, and their dances of lewd delight; thy delicate limbs were but taught the attitude that Nature dedicates to the worship of a God, and the music of thy voice was tuned to the songs of thy fallen country, sad with the memory of her wrongs, animated with the names of her heroes, holy with the solemnity of her prayers. These scrolls and the lessons of our seers have imparted to thee such of our science and our history as may fit thy mind to aspire, and thy heart to feel for a sacred cause. Thou listenest to me, Leila?"

Perplexed and wondering, for never before had her father addressed her in such a strain, the maiden answered with an earnestness of manner that seemed to content the questioner; and he resumed, with an altered, hollow, solemn voice, —

“Then curse the persecutors. Daughter of the great Hebrew race, arise and curse the Moorish taskmaster and spoiler!”

As he spoke, the adjuror himself rose, lifting his right hand on high, while his left touched the shoulder of the maiden. But she, after gazing a moment in wild and terrified amazement upon his face, fell cowering at his knees, and clasping them imploringly, exclaimed in scarce articulate murmurs, —

“Oh, spare me, spare me!”

The Hebrew — for such he was — surveyed her, as she thus quailed at his feet, with a look of rage and scorn; his hand wandered to his poniard, he half unsheathed it, thrust it back with a muttered curse, and then, deliberately drawing it forth, cast it on the ground beside her.

“Degenerate girl,” he said, in accents that vainly struggled for calm, “if thou hast admitted to thy heart one unworthy thought towards a Moorish infidel, dig deep and root it out, even with the knife, and to the death, — so wilt thou save this hand from that degrading task.”

He drew himself hastily from her grasp, and left the unfortunate girl alone and senseless.

CHAPTER V.

AMBITION DISTORTED INTO VICE BY LAW.

ON descending a broad flight of stairs from the apartment, the Hebrew encountered an old man habited in loose garments of silk and fur, upon whose withered and wrinkled face life

seemed scarcely to struggle against the advance of death, so haggard, wan, and corpse-like was its aspect.

"Ximen," said the Israelite, "trusty and beloved servant, follow me to the cavern."

He did not tarry for an answer, but continued his way with rapid strides through various courts and alleys, till he came at length into a narrow, dark, and damp gallery, that seemed cut from the living rock. At its entrance was a strong grate, which gave way to the Hebrew's touch upon the spring, though the united strength of a hundred men could not have moved it from its hinge. Taking up a brazen lamp that burned in a niche within it, the Hebrew paused impatiently till the feeble steps of the old man reached the spot, and then, reclosing the grate, pursued his winding way for a considerable distance, till he stopped suddenly by a part of the rock which seemed in no respect different from the rest; and so artfully contrived and concealed was the door which he now opened, and so suddenly did it yield to his hand, that it appeared literally the effect of enchantment when the rock yawned, and discovered a circular cavern lighted with brazen lamps, and spread with hangings and cushions of thick furs. Upon rude and seemingly natural pillars of rock, various antique and rusty arms were suspended; in large niches were deposited scrolls, clasped and bound with iron; and a profusion of strange and uncouth instruments and machines (in which modern science might perhaps discover the tools of chemical invention) gave a magical and ominous aspect to the wild abode.

The Hebrew cast himself on a couch of furs; and as the old man entered and closed the door, "Ximen," said he, "fill out wine, — it is a soothing counsellor; and I need it."

Extracting from one of the recesses of the cavern a flask and goblet, Ximen offered to his lord a copious draught of the sparkling vintage of the Vega, which seemed to invigorate and restore him.

"Old man," said he, concluding the potation with a deep-drawn sigh, "fill to thyself, — drink till thy veins feel young."

Ximen obeyed the mandate but imperfectly; the wine just touched his lips, and the goblet was put aside.

"Ximen," resumed the Israelite, "how many of our race have been butchered by the avarice of the Moorish kings since first thou didst set foot within the city?"

"Three thousand. The number was completed last winter, by the order of Jusef the vizier; and their goods and coffers are transformed into shafts and cimeters against the dogs of Galilee."

"Three thousand, — no more? Three thousand only? I would the number had been tripled, for the interest is becoming due."

"My brother and my son and my grandson are among the number," said the old man, and his face grew yet more deathlike.

"Their monuments shall be in hecatombs of their tyrants. They shall not, at least, call the Jews niggards in revenge."

"But pardon me, noble chief of a fallen people, thinkest thou we shall be less despoiled and trodden under foot by yon haughty and stiff-necked Nazarenes than by the Arabian misbelievers?"

"Accursed, in truth, are both," returned the Hebrew; "but the one promise more fairly than the other. I have seen this Ferdinand and his proud queen; they are pledged to accord us rights and immunities we have never known before in Europe."

"And they will not touch our traffic, our gains, our gold?"

"Out on thee!" cried the fiery Israelite, stamping on the ground. "I would all the gold of earth were sunk into the everlasting pit! It is this mean and miserable and loathsome leprosy of avarice that gnaws away from our whole race the heart, the soul, nay, the very form, of man! Many a time, when I have seen the lordly features of the descendants of Solomon and Joshua (features that stamp the nobility of the Eastern world, born to mastery and command) sharpened and furrowed by petty cares; when I have looked upon the frame of the strong man bowed, like a crawling reptile, to some huckstering bargainer of silks and unguents, and heard the

voice, that should be raising the battle-cry, smoothed into fawning accents of base fear or yet baser hope, — I have asked myself if I am indeed of the blood of Israel, and thanked the great Jehovah that he hath spared me at least the curse that hath blasted my brotherhood into usurers and slaves!”

Ximen prudently forbore an answer to enthusiasm which he neither shared nor understood; but, after a brief silence, turned back the stream of the conversation.

“You resolve, then, upon prosecuting vengeance on the Moors, at whatsoever hazard of the broken faith of these Nazarenes?”

“Ay, the vapour of human blood hath risen unto heaven, and, collected into thunder-clouds, hangs over the doomed and guilty city. And now, Ximen, I have a new cause for hatred to the Moors: the flower that I have reared and watched, the spoiler hath sought to pluck it from my hearth. Leila, thou hast guarded her ill, Ximen; and wert thou not endeared to me by thy very malice and vices, the rising sun should have seen thy trunk on the waters of the Darro.”

“My lord,” replied Ximen, “if thou, the wisest of our people, canst not guard a maiden from love, how canst thou see crime in the dull eyes and numbed senses of a miserable old man?”

The Israelite did not answer, nor seem to hear this deprecatory remonstrance. He appeared rather occupied with his own thoughts; and, speaking to himself, he muttered: “It must be so. The sacrifice is hard, the danger great, but here, at least, it is more immediate. It shall be done. Ximen,” he continued, speaking aloud, “dost thou feel assured that even mine own countrymen, mine own tribe, know me not as one of them? Were my despised birth and religion published, my limbs would be torn asunder as an impostor, and all the arts of the Cabala could not save me.”

“Doubt not, great master; none in Granada, save thy faithful Ximen, know thy secret.”

“So let me dream and hope. And now to my work; for this night must be spent in toil.”

The Hebrew drew before him some of the strange instr-

ments we have described, and took from the recesses in the rock several scrolls. The old man lay at his feet, ready to obey his behests, but to all appearance rigid and motionless as the dead, whom his blanched hues and shrivelled form resembled. It was, indeed, as the picture of the enchanter at his work, and the corpse of some man of old, revived from the grave to minister to his spells and execute his commands.

Enough in the preceding conversation has transpired to convince the reader that the Hebrew, in whom he has already detected the Almamen of the Alhambra, was of no character common to his tribe. Of a lineage that shrouded itself in the darkness of his mysterious people in their day of power, and possessed of immense wealth which threw into poverty the resources of Gothic princes, the youth of that remarkable man had been spent, not in traffic and merchandise, but travel and study.

As a child, his home had been in Granada. He had seen his father butchered by the late king, Muley Abul Hassan, without other crime than his reputed riches, and his body literally cut open, to search for the jewels it was supposed he had swallowed. He saw and, boy as he was, he vowed revenge. A distant kinsman bore the orphan to lands more secure from persecution; and the art with which the Jews concealed their wealth, scattering it over various cities, had secured to Almamen the treasures the tyrant of Granada had failed to grasp.

He had visited the greater part of the world then known, and resided for many years at the court of the sultan of that hoary Egypt which still retained its fame for abstruse science and magic lore. He had not in vain applied himself to such tempting and wild researches, and had acquired many of those secrets now perhaps lost forever to the world. We do not mean to intimate that he attained to what legend and superstition impose upon our faith as the art of sorcery. He could neither command the elements nor pierce the veil of the future, — scatter armies with a word, nor pass from spot to spot by the utterance of a charmed formula. But men who for ages had passed their lives in attempting all the effects

that can astonish and awe the vulgar, could not but learn some secrets which all the more sober wisdom of modern times would search ineffectually to solve or to revive. And many of such arts, acquired mechanically (their invention often the work of a chemical accident), those who attained to them could not always explain, nor account for the phenomena they created, so that the mightiness of their own deceptions deceived themselves; and they often believed they were the masters of the Nature to which they were, in reality, but erratic and wild disciples. Of such was the student in that grim cavern. He was in some measure the dupe, partly of his own bewildered wisdom, partly of the fervour of an imagination exceedingly high-wrought and enthusiastic. His own gorgeous vanity intoxicated him; and if it be an historical truth that the kings of the ancient world, blinded by their own power, had moments in which they believed themselves more than men, it is not incredible that sages, elevated even above kings, should conceive a frenzy as weak, or, it may be, as sublime, and imagine that they did not claim in vain the awful dignity with which the faith of the multitude invested their faculties and gifts.

But though the accident of birth, which excluded him from all field for energy and ambition, had thus directed the powerful mind of Almamen to contemplation and study, Nature had never intended passions so fierce for the calm, though visionary, pursuits to which he was addicted. Amidst scrolls and seers he had pined for action and glory; and baffled in all wholesome egress by the universal exclusion which, in every land and from every faith, met the religion he belonged to, the faculties within him ran riot, producing gigantic, but baseless schemes, which, as one after the other crumbled away, left behind feelings of dark misanthropy and intense revenge.

Perhaps, had his religion been prosperous and powerful, he might have been a sceptic: persecution and affliction made him a fanatic. Yet, true to that prominent characteristic of the old Hebrew race which made them look to a Messiah only as a warrior and a prince, and which taught them to associate

all their hopes and schemes with worldly victories and power, Almamen desired rather to advance, than to obey, his religion. He cared little for its precepts, he thought little of its doctrines; but, night and day, he revolved his schemes for its earthly restoration and triumph.

At that time the Moors in Spain were far more deadly persecutors of the Jews than the Christians were. Amidst the Spanish cities on the coast that merchant tribe had formed commercial connections with the Christians sufficiently beneficial, both to individuals and to communities, to obtain for them, not only toleration, but something of personal friendship, wherever men bought and sold in the market-place. And the gloomy fanaticism which afterwards stained the fame of the great Ferdinand, and introduced the horrors of the Inquisition, had not yet made itself more than fitfully visible. But the Moors had treated this unhappy people with a wholesale and relentless barbarity. At Granada, under the reign of the fierce father of Boabdil, — “that king with the tiger heart,” — the Jews had been literally placed without the pale of humanity; and even under the mild and contemplative Boabdil himself they had been plundered without mercy, and if suspected of secreting their treasures, massacred without scruple: the wants of the State continued their unrelenting accusers, — their wealth, their inexpiable crime.

It was in the midst of these barbarities that Almamen, for the first time since the day when the death-shriek of his agonized father rang in his ears, suddenly returned to Granada. He saw the unmitigated miseries of his brethren, and he remembered and repeated his vow. His name changed, his kindred dead, none remembered, in the mature Almamen, the beardless child of Issachar the Jew. He had long, indeed, deemed it advisable to disguise his faith, and was known throughout the African kingdoms but as the potent santón, or the wise magician.

This fame soon lifted him, in Granada, high in the councils of the court. Admitted to the intimacy of Muley Hassan, with Boabdil and the queen-mother he had conspired against that monarch, and had lived at least to avenge his father upon

the royal murderer. He was no less intimate with Boabdil; but steeled against fellowship or affection for all men out of the pale of his faith, he saw in the confidence of the king only the blindness of a victim.

Serpent as he was, he cared not through what mire of treachery and fraud he trailed his baleful folds, so that at last he could spring upon his prey. Nature had given him sagacity and strength. The curse of circumstance had humbled, but reconciled him to the dust. He had the crawl of the reptile, — he had also its poison and its fangs.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LION IN THE NET.

It was the next night, not long before daybreak, that the king of Granada abruptly summoned to his council Jusef, his vizier. The old man found Boabdil in great disorder and excitement; but he almost deemed his sovereign mad when he received from him the order to seize upon the person of Muza Ben Abil Gazan and to lodge him in the strongest dungeon of the Vermilion Tower. Presuming upon Boabdil's natural mildness, the vizier ventured to remonstrate, to suggest the danger of laying violent hands upon a chief so beloved, and to inquire what cause should be assigned for the outrage.

The veins swelled like cords upon Boabdil's brow as he listened to the vizier, and his answer was short and peremptory: —

"Am I yet a king, that I should fear a subject or excuse my will? Thou hast my orders; there are my signet and the firman: obedience, or the bow-string!"

Never before had Boabdil so resembled his dread father in speech and air; the vizier trembled to the soles of his feet,

and withdrew in silence. Boabdil watched him depart; and then, clasping his hands in great emotion, exclaimed, "O lips of the dead, ye have warned me, and to you I sacrifice the friend of my youth!"

On quitting Boabdil, the vizier, taking with him some of those foreign slaves of a seraglio who know no sympathy with human passion outside its walls, bent his way to the palace of Muza, sorely puzzled and perplexed. He did not, however, like to venture upon the hazard of the alarm it might occasion throughout the neighbourhood if he endeavoured, at so unreasonable an hour, to force an entrance. He resolved, rather, with his train, to wait at a little distance till, with the growing dawn, the gates should be unclosed and the inmates of the palace astir.

Accordingly, cursing his stars and wondering at his mission, Jusef and his silent and ominous attendants concealed themselves in a small copse adjoining the palace until the daylight fairly broke over the awakened city. He then passed into the palace, and was conducted to a hall where he found the renowned Moslem already astir, and conferring with some Zegri captains upon the tactics of a sortie designed for that day.

It was with so evident a reluctance and apprehension that Jusef approached the prince that the fierce and quick-sighted Zegris instantly suspected some evil intention in his visit; and when Muza, in surprise, yielded to the prayer of the vizier for a private audience, it was with scowling brows and sparkling eyes that the Moorish warriors left the darling of the nobles alone with the messenger of their king.

"By the tomb of the prophet," said one of the Zegris as he quitted the hall, "the timid Boabdil suspects our Ben Abil Gazan. I learned of this before."

"Hush!" said another of the band; "let us watch. If the king touch a hair of Muza's head, Allah have mercy on his sins!"

Meanwhile, the vizier, in silence, showed to Muza the firman and the signet; and then, without venturing to announce the place to which he was commissioned to conduct

the prince, besought him to follow at once. Muza changed colour, but not with fear.

"Alas!" said he, in a tone of deep sorrow, "can it be that I have fallen under my royal kinsman's suspicion or displeasure? But no matter; proud to set to Granada an example of valour in her defence, be it mine to set also an example of obedience to her king. Go on, I will follow thee. Yet stay,—you will have no need of guards; let us depart by a private egress: the Zegris might misgive, did they see me leave the palace with you at the very time the army are assembling in the Vivarrambla, and awaiting my presence. This way."

Thus saying, Muza, who, fierce as he was, obeyed every impulse that the Oriental loyalty dictated from a subject to a king, passed from the hall to a small door that admitted into the garden, and in thoughtful silence accompanied the vizier towards the Alhambra. As they passed the copse in which Muza, two nights before, had met with Almamen, the Moor, lifting his head suddenly, beheld fixed upon him the dark eyes of the magician as he emerged from the trees. Muza thought there was in those eyes a malign and hostile exultation; but Almamen, gravely saluting him, passed on through the grove. The prince did not deign to look back, or he might once more have encountered that withering gaze.

"Proud heathen," muttered Almamen to himself, "thy father filled his treasuries from the gold of many a tortured Hebrew; and even thou, too haughty to be the miser, hast been savage enough to play the bigot. Thy name is a curse in Israel; yet dost thou lust after the daughter of our despised race, and could defeated passion sting thee, I were avenged. Ay, sweep on, with thy stately step and lofty crest,—thou goest to chains, perhaps to death."

As Almamen thus vented his bitter spirit, the last gleam of the white robes of Muza vanished from his gaze. He paused a moment, turned away abruptly, and said, half aloud, "Vengeance, not on one man only, but on a whole race! Now for the Nazarene."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROYAL TENT OF SPAIN. — THE KING AND THE DOMINICAN. — THE VISITOR AND THE HOSTAGE.

OUR narrative now summons us to the Christian army, and to the tent in which the Spanish king held nocturnal counsel with some of his more confidential warriors and advisers. Ferdinand had taken the field with all the pomp and circumstance of a tournament rather than of a campaign, and his pavilion literally blazed with purple and cloth of gold.

The king sat at the head of a table on which were scattered maps and papers; nor in countenance and mien did that great and politic monarch seem unworthy of the brilliant chivalry by which he was surrounded. His black hair, richly perfumed and anointed, fell in long locks on either side of a high, imperial brow, upon whose calm though not unfurrowed surface the physiognomist would in vain have sought to read the inscrutable heart of kings. His features were regular and majestic, and his mantle, clasped with a single jewel of rare price and lustre, and wrought at the breast with a silver cross, waved over a vigorous and manly frame, which derived from the composed and tranquil dignity of habitual command that imposing effect which many of the renowned knights and heroes in his presence took from loftier stature and ampler proportions. At his right hand sat Prince Juan, his son, in the first bloom of youth; at his left, the celebrated Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz; along the table, in the order of their military rank, were seen the splendid Duke of Medina Sidonia, equally noble in aspect and in name, the worn and thoughtful countenance of the Marquis de Villena

(the Bayard of Spain), the melancholy brow of the heroic Alonzo de Aguilar, and the gigantic frame, the animated features, and sparkling eyes of that fiery Hernando del Pulgar surnamed "the knight of the exploits."

"You see, señores," said the king, continuing an address to which his chiefs seemed to listen with reverential attention, "our best hope of speedily gaining the city is rather in the dissensions of the Moors than our own sacred arms. The walls are strong, the population still numerous, and under Muza Ben Abil Gazan the tactics of the hostile army are, it must be owned, administered with such skill as to threaten very formidable delays to the period of our conquest. Avoiding the hazard of a fixed battle, the infidel cavalry harass our camp by perpetual skirmishes; and in the mountain defiles our detachments cannot cope with their light horse and treacherous ambuscades. It is true that by dint of time, by the complete devastation of the Vega, and by vigilant prevention of convoys from the sea-towns, we might starve the city into yielding. But alas! my lords, our enemies are scattered and numerous, and Granada is not the only place before which the standard of Spain should be unfurled. Thus situated, the lion does not disdain to serve himself of the fox; and, fortunately, we have now in Granada an ally that fights for us. I have actual knowledge of all that passes within the Alhambra. The king yet remains in his palace, irresolute and dreaming; and I trust that an intrigue by which his jealousies are aroused against his general, Muza, may end either in the loss of that able leader, or in the commotion of open rebellion or civil war. Treason within Granada will open its gates to us."

"Sire," said Ponce de Leon, after a pause, "under your counsels I no more doubt of seeing our banner float above the Vermilion Towers than I doubt the rising of the sun over yonder hills; it matters little whether we win by stratagem or force. But I need not say to your Highness that we should carefully beware lest we be amused by inventions of the enemy, and trust to conspiracies which may be but lying tales to blunt our sabres and paralyze our action."

"Bravely spoken, wise De Leon!" exclaimed Hernando del Pulgar, hotly; "and against these infidels, aided by the cunning of the Evil One, methinks our best wisdom lies in the sword-arm. Well says our old Castilian proverb, —

"Curse them devoutly,
Hammer them stoutly."

The king smiled slightly at the ardour of the favourite of his army, but looked round for more deliberate counsel.

"Sire," said Villena, "far be it from us to inquire the grounds upon which your Majesty builds your hope of dissension among the foe; but, placing the most sanguine confidence in a wisdom never to be deceived, it is clear that we should relax no energy within our means, but fight while we plot, and seek to conquer, while we do not neglect to undermine."

"You speak well, my lord," said Ferdinand, thoughtfully; "and you yourself shall head a strong detachment to-morrow to lay waste the Vega. Seek me two hours hence; the council for the present is dissolved."

The knights rose, and withdrew with the usual grave and stately ceremonies of respect which Ferdinand observed to, and exacted from, his court. The young prince remained.

"Son," said Ferdinand, when they were alone, "early and betimes should the Infants of Spain be lessoned in the science of kingcraft. These nobles are among the brightest jewels of the crown; but still, it is in the crown and for the crown that their light should sparkle. Thou seest how hot and fierce and warlike are the chiefs of Spain, — excellent virtues when manifested against our foes; but had we no foes, Juan, such virtues might cause us exceeding trouble. By Saint Jago, I have founded a mighty monarchy! Observe how it should be maintained, — by science, Juan, by science; and science is as far removed from brute force as this sword from a crowbar. Thou seemest bewildered and amazed, my son; thou hast heard that I seek to conquer Granada by dissensions among the Moors: when Granada is conquered, remember that the nobles themselves are at Granada. Ave Maria!

blessed be the Holy Mother, under whose eyes are the hearts of kings!"

Ferdinand crossed himself devoutly; and then, rising, drew aside a part of the drapery of the pavilion, and called in a low voice the name of Perez. A grave Spaniard, somewhat past the verge of middle age, appeared.

"Perez," said the king, reseating himself, "has the person we expected from Granada yet arrived?"

"Sire, yes, accompanied by a maiden."

"He hath kept his word; admit them. Ha! holy father, thy visits are always as balsam to the heart."

"Save you, my son!" returned a man in the robes of a Dominican friar, who had entered suddenly and without ceremony by another part of the tent, and who now seated himself with smileless composure at a little distance from the king.

There was a dead silence for some moments; and Perez still lingered within the tent, as if in doubt whether the entrance of the friar would not prevent or delay obedience to the king's command. On the calm face of Ferdinand himself appeared a slight shade of discomposure and irresolution, when the monk thus resumed, —

"My presence, my son, will not, I trust, disturb your conference with the infidel, since you deem that worldly policy demands your parley with the men of Belial."

"Doubtless not, doubtless not," returned the king, quickly; then, muttering to himself, "How wondrously doth this holy man penetrate into all our movements and designs!" he added aloud, "Let the messenger enter."

Perez bowed and withdrew.

During this time the young prince reclined in listless silence on his seat, and on his delicate features was an expression of weariness which augured but ill of his fitness for the stern business to which the lessons of his wise father were intended to educate his mind. His, indeed, was the age and his the soul for pleasure: the tumult of the camp was to him but a holiday exhibition; the march of an army, the exhilaration of a spectacle; the court as a banquet; the

throne, the best seat at the entertainment. The life of the heir-apparent, to the life of the king possessive, is as the distinction between enchanting hope and tiresome satiety.

The small gray eyes of the friar wandered over each of his royal companions with a keen and penetrating glance, and then settled in the aspect of humility on the rich carpets that bespread the floor; nor did he again lift them till Perez, reappearing, admitted to the tent the Israelite, Almamen, accompanied by a female figure, whose long veil, extending from head to foot, could conceal neither the beautiful proportions nor the trembling agitation of her frame.

"When last, great king, I was admitted to thy presence," said Almamen, "thou didst make question of the sincerity and faith of thy servant; thou didst ask me for a surety of my faith; thou didst demand a hostage, and didst refuse further parley without such pledge were yielded to thee. Lo, I place under thy kingly care this maiden, — the sole child of my house, — as surety of my truth; I intrust to thee a life dearer than my own."

"You have kept faith with us, stranger," said the king, in that soft and musical voice which well disguised his deep craft and his unrelenting will, "and the maiden whom you intrust to our charge shall be ranked with the ladies of our royal consort."

"Sire," replied Almamen, with touching earnestness, "you now hold the power of life and death over all for whom this heart can breathe a prayer or cherish a hope, save for my countrymen and my religion. This solemn pledge between thee and me I render up without scruple, without fear. To thee I give a hostage, — *from* thee I have but a promise."

"But it is the promise of a king, a Christian, and a knight," said the king, with dignity rather mild than arrogant; "among monarchs, what hostage can be more sacred? Let this pass. How proceed affairs in the rebel city?"

"May this maiden withdraw ere I answer my lord the king?" said Almamen.

The young prince started to his feet. "Shall I conduct

this new charge to my mother?" he asked in a low voice, addressing Ferdinand.

The king half smiled. "The holy father were a better guide," he returned, in the same tone. But though the Dominican heard the hint, he retained his motionless posture; and Ferdinand, after a momentary gaze on the friar, turned away. "Be it so, Juan," said he, with a look meant to convey caution to the prince; "Perez shall accompany you to the queen. Return the moment your mission is fulfilled, — we want your presence."

While this conversation was carried on between the father and son, the Hebrew was whispering, in his sacred tongue, words of comfort and remonstrance to the maiden; but they appeared to have but little of the desired effect, and suddenly falling on his breast, she wound her arms around the Hebrew, whose breast shook with strong emotions, and exclaimed passionately, in the same language: "Oh, my father, what have I done? Why send me from thee? Why intrust thy child to the stranger? Spare me, spare me!"

"Child of my heart," returned the Hebrew, with solemn but tender accents, "even as Abraham offered up his son, must I offer thee upon the altars of our faith; but, O Leila! even as the angel of the Lord forbade the offering, so shall thy youth be spared, and thy years reserved for the glory of generations yet unborn. King of Spain," he continued, in the Spanish tongue, suddenly and eagerly, "you are a father; forgive my weakness, and speed this parting."

Juan approached, and with respectful courtesy attempted to take the hand of the maiden.

"You?" said the Israelite, with a dark frown. "O king! the prince is young."

"Honour knoweth no distinction of age," answered the king. "What ho, Perez! accompany this maiden and the prince to the queen's pavilion."

The sight of the sober years and grave countenance of the attendant seemed to reassure the Hebrew. He strained Leila in his arms, printed a kiss upon her forehead without removing her veil, and then, placing her almost in the arms of

Perez, turned away to the farther end of the tent, and concealed his face with his hands. The king appeared touched, but the Dominican gazed upon the whole scene with a sour scowl.

Leila still paused for a moment; and then, as if recovering her self-possession, said aloud and distinctly, "Man deserts me, but I will not forget that God is over all." Shaking off the hand of the Spaniard, she continued: "Lead on; I follow thee!" and left the tent with a steady and even majestic step.

"And now," said the king, when alone with the Dominican and Almamen, "how proceed our hopes?"

"Boabdil," replied the Israelite, "is aroused against both his army and their leader, Muza: the king will not quit the Alhambra; and this morning, ere I left the city, Muza himself was in the prisons of the palace."

"How?" cried the king, starting from his seat.

"This is my work," pursued the Hebrew, coldly. "It is these hands that are shaping for Ferdinand of Spain the keys of Granada."

"And right kingly shall be your guerdon," said the Spanish monarch. "Meanwhile, accept this earnest of our favour."

So saying, he took from his breast a chain of massive gold, the links of which were curiously inwrought with gems, and extended it to the Israelite. Almamen moved not. A dark flush upon his countenance bespoke the feelings he with difficulty restrained.

"I sell not my foes for gold, great king," said he, with a stern smile; "I sell my foes to buy the ransom of my friends."

"Churlish," said Ferdinand, offended; "but speak on, man, speak on!"

"If I place Granada, ere two weeks are past, within thy power, what shall be my reward?"

"Thou didst talk to me, when last we met, of immunities to the Jews."

The calm Dominican looked up as the king spoke, crossed himself, and resumed his attitude of humility.

"I demand for the people of Israel," returned Almamen, "free leave to trade and abide within the city and follow

their callings, subjected only to the same laws and the same imposts as the Christian population."

"The same laws and the same imposts! Humph! there are difficulties in the concession. If we refuse?"

"Our treaty is ended. Give me back the maiden, — you will have no further need of the hostage you demanded. I return to the city, and renew our interviews no more."

Politick and cold-blooded as was the temperament of the great Ferdinand, he had yet the imperious and haughty nature of a prosperous and long-descended king; and he bit his lip in deep displeasure at the tone of the dictatorial and stately stranger.

"Thou usest plain language, my friend," said he. "My words can be as rudely spoken: thou art in my power, and canst return not, save at my permission."

"I have your royal word, sire, for free entrance and safe egress," answered Almanen. "Break it, and Granada is with the Moors till the Darro runs red with the blood of her heroes, and her people strew the vales as the leaves in autumn."

"Art thou then thyself of the Jewish faith?" asked the king. "If thou art not, wherefore are the outcasts of the world so dear to thee?"

"My fathers were of that creed, royal Ferdinand; and if I myself desert their creed, I do not desert their cause. O king! are my terms scorned or accepted?"

"I accept them, provided, first, that thou obtainest the exile or death of Muza; secondly, that within two weeks of this date thou bringest me, along with the chief councillors of Granada, the written treaty of the capitulation and the keys of the city. Do this, and though the sole king in Christendom who dares the hazard, I offer to the Israelites throughout Andalusia the common laws and rights of citizens of Spain, and to thee I will accord such dignity as may content thy ambition."

The Hebrew bowed reverently, and drew from his breast a scroll, which he placed on the table before the king.

"This writing, mighty Ferdinand, contains the articles of our compact."

"How, knave! wouldst thou have us commit our royal signature to conditions with such as thou art, to the chance of the public eye? The king's word is the king's bond."

The Hebrew took up the scroll with imperturbable composure. "My child!" said he. "Will your Majesty summon back my child? We would depart."

"A sturdy mendicant this, by the Virgin!" muttered the king; and then, speaking aloud, "Give me the paper, I will scan it."

Running his eyes hastily over the words, Ferdinand paused a moment, and then drew towards him the implements of writing, signed the scroll, and returned it to Almamen.

The Israelite kissed it thrice with Oriental veneration, and replaced it in his breast.

Ferdinand looked at him hard and curiously. He was a profound reader of men's characters; but that of his guest baffled and perplexed him.

"And how, stranger," said he, gravely, — "how can I trust that man who thus distrusts one king and sells another?"

"O king!" replied Almamen (accustomed from his youth to commune with and command the possessors of thrones yet more absolute), — "O king! if thou believest me actuated by personal and selfish interests in this our compact, thou hast but to make my service minister to my interest, and the lore of human nature will tell thee that thou has won a ready and submissive slave. But if thou thinkest I have avowed sentiments less abject, and developed qualities higher than those of the mere bargainer for sordid power, oughtest thou not to rejoice that chance has thrown into thy way one whose intellect and faculties may be made thy tool? If I betray another, that other is my deadly foe. Dost not thou, the lord of armies, betray thine enemy? The Moor is an enemy bitterer to myself than to thee. Because I betray an enemy, am I unworthy to serve a friend? If I, a single man and a stranger to the Moor, can yet command the secrets of palaces and render vain the counsels of armed men, have I not in that attested that I am one of whom a wise king can make an able servant?"

"Thou art a subtle reasoner, my friend," said Ferdinand, smiling gently. "Peace go with thee! our conference for the time is ended. What ho, Perez!"

The attendant appeared.

"Thou hast left the maiden with the queen?"

"Sire, you have been obeyed."

"Conduct this stranger to the guard who led him through the camp. He quits us under the same protection. Farewell! Yet stay, — thou art assured that Muza Ben Abil Gazan is in the prisons of the Moor?"

"Yes."

"Blessed be the Virgin!"

"Thou hast heard our conference, Father Tomas?" said the king, anxiously, when the Hebrew had withdrawn.

"I have, son."

"Did thy veins freeze with horror?"

"Only when my son signed the scroll. It seemed to me then that I saw the cloven foot of the tempter."

"Tush, father! the tempter would have been more wise than to reckon upon a faith which no ink and no parchment can render valid, if the Church absolve the compact. Thou understandest me, father?"

"I do. I know your pious heart and well-judging mind."

"Thou wert right," resumed the king, musingly, "when thou didst tell us that these caitiff Jews were waxing strong in the fatness of their substance. They would have equal laws, the inscilent blasphemers!"

"Son!" said the Dominican, with earnest adjuration, "God, who has prospered your arms and councils, will require at your hands an account of the power intrusted to you. Shall there be no difference between His friends and His foes, — His disciples and His crucifiers?"

"Priest," said the king, laying his hand on the monk's shoulder, and with a saturnine smile upon his countenance, "were religion silent in this matter, policy has a voice loud enough to make itself heard. The Jews demand equal rights: when men demand equality with their masters, treason is at work, and Justice sharpens her sword. Equality! these

wealthy usurers! Sacred Virgin, they would be soon buying up our kingdoms."

The Dominican gazed hard on the king. "Son, I trust thee," he said, in a low voice, and glided from the tent.

CHAPTER II.

THE AMBUSH, THE STRIFE, AND THE CAPTURE.

THE dawn was slowly breaking over the wide valley of Granada as Almamen pursued his circuitous and solitary path back to the city. He was now in a dark and entangled hollow, covered with brakes and bushes, from amidst which tall forest trees rose in frequent intervals, gloomy and breathless in the still morning air. As, emerging from this jungle, if so it may be called, the towers of Granada gleamed upon him, a human countenance peered from the shade, and Almamen started to see two dark eyes fixed upon his own.

He halted abruptly and put his hand on his dagger, when a low, sharp whistle from the apparition before him was answered around, behind; and ere he could draw breath, the Israelite was begirt by a group of Moors in the garb of peasants.

"Well, my masters," said Almamen, calmly, as he encountered the wild, savage countenances that glared upon him, "think you there is aught to fear from the solitary santon?"

"It is the magician," whispered one man to his neighbour,—"let him pass."

"Nay," was the answer, "take him before the captain; we have orders to seize upon all we meet."

This counsel prevailed; and gnashing his teeth with secret rage, Almamen found himself hurried along by the peasants through the thickest part of the copse. At length the procession stopped in a semicircular patch of rank sward, in which

several head of cattle were quietly grazing, and a yet more numerous troop of peasants reclined around upon the grass.

"Whom have we here?" asked a voice which startled back the dark blood from Almamen's cheek; and a Moor of commanding presence rose from the midst of his brethren. "By the beard of the Prophet, it is the false santón! What dost thou from Granada at this hour?"

"Noble Muza," returned Almamen, — who, though indeed amazed that one whom he had imagined his victim was thus unaccountably become his judge, retained, at least, the semblance of composure, — "my answer is to be given only to my lord the king; it is his commands that I obey."

"Thou art aware," said Muza, frowning, "that thy life is forfeited without appeal? Whatsoever inmate of Granada is found without the walls between sunrise and sunset, dies the death of a traitor and deserter."

"The servants of the Alhambra are excepted," answered the Israelite, without changing countenance.

"Ah," muttered Muza, as a painful and sudden thought seemed to cross him, "can it be possible that the rumour of the city has truth, and that the monarch of Granada is in treaty with the foe?" He mused a little; and then, motioning the Moors to withdraw, he continued aloud: "Almamen, answer me truly: hast thou sought the Christian camp with any message from the king?"

"I have not."

"Art thou without the walls on the mission of the king?"

"If I be so, I am a traitor to the king should I reveal his secret."

"I doubt thee much, santón," said Muza, after a pause; "I know thee for my enemy, and I do believe thy counsels have poisoned the king's ear against me, his people, and his duties. But no matter; thy life is spared a while. Thou remainest with us, and with us shalt thou return to the king."

"But, noble Muza —"

"I have said! Guard the santón; mount him upon one of our chargers: he shall abide with us in our ambush."

While Almamen chafed in vain at his arrest, all in the

Christian camp was yet still. At length, as the sun began to lift himself above the mountains, first a murmur, and then a din, betokened warlike preparations. Several parties of horse, under gallant and experienced leaders, formed themselves in different quarters, and departed in different ways, on expeditions of forage, or in the hope of skirmish with the straggling detachments of the enemy. Of these, the best equipped was conducted by the Marquis de Villena and his gallant brother, Don Alonzo de Pacheco. In this troop, too, rode many of the best blood of Spain; for in that chivalric army the officers vied with each other who should most eclipse the meaner soldiery in feats of personal valour, and the name of Villena drew around him the eager and ardent spirits that pined at the general inactivity of Ferdinand's politic campaign.

The sun, now high in heaven, glittered on the splendid arms and gorgeous pennons of Villena's company as, leaving the camp behind, it entered a rich and wooded district that skirts the mountain barrier of the Vega. The brilliancy of the day, the beauty of the scene, the hope and excitement of enterprise, animated the spirits of the whole party. In these expeditions strict discipline was often abandoned, from the certainty that it could be resumed at need. Conversation, gay and loud, interspersed at times with snatches of song, was heard amongst the soldiery; and in the nobler group that rode with Villena, there was even less of the proverbial gravity of Spaniards.

"Now, Marquis," said Don Estevon de Suzon, "what wager shall be between us as to which lance this day robs Moorish beauty of the greatest number of its worshippers?"

"My falchion against your jennet," said Don Alonzo de Pacheco, taking up the challenge.

"Agreed. But, talking of beauty, were you in the queen's pavilion last night, noble marquis? It was enriched by a new maiden, whose strange and sudden apparition none can account for. Her eyes would have eclipsed the fatal glance of Cava; and had I been Rodrigo, I might have lost a crown for her smile."

"Ay," said Villena, "I heard of her beauty, — some hostage from one of the traitor Moors with whom the king (the saints bless him!) bargains for the city. They tell me the prince incurred the queen's grave rebuke for his attentions to the maiden."

"And this morning I saw that fearful Father Tomas steal into the prince's tent. I wish Don Juan well through the lecture. The monk's advice is like the *algarroba*:¹ when it is laid up to dry, it may be reasonably wholesome; but it is harsh and bitter enough when taken fresh."

At this moment one of the subaltern officers rode up to the marquis and whispered in his ear.

"Ha," said Villena, "the Virgin be praised! Sir Knights, booty is at hand. Silence! close the ranks."

With that, mounting a little eminence and shading his eyes with his hand, the marquis surveyed the plain below; and at some distance he beheld a horde of Moorish peasants driving some cattle into a thick copse. The word was hastily given, the troop dashed on, every voice was hushed, and the clatter of mail and the sound of hoofs alone broke the delicious silence of the noonday landscape. Ere they reached the copse, the peasants had disappeared within it. The marquis marshalled his men in a semicircle round the trees, and sent on a detachment to the rear, to cut off every egress from the wood. This done, the troop dashed within. For the first few yards the space was more open than they had anticipated; but the ground soon grew uneven, rugged, and almost precipitous, and the soil and the interlaced trees alike forbade any rapid motion to the horse. Don Alonzo de Pacheco, mounted on a charger whose agile and docile limbs had been tutored to every description of warfare, and himself of light weight and incomparable horsemanship, dashed on before the rest. The trees hid him for a moment; when suddenly a wild yell was heard, and as it ceased, up rose the solitary voice of the Spaniard, shouting, "Santiago, y cierra, España (Saint Jago, and charge, Spain)!"

Each cavalier spurred forward; when suddenly a shower of

¹ The *algarroba* is a sort of leguminous plant common in Spain.

darts and arrows rattled on their armour, and up sprung from bush and reeds and rocky clift a number of Moors, and with wild shouts swarmed around the Spaniards.

"Back for your lives," cried Villena; "we are beset! Make for the level ground!"

He turned, spurred from the thicket, and saw the Paynim foe emerging through the glen, line after line of man and horse, each Moor leading his slight and fiery steed by the bridle, and leaping on it as he issued from the wood into the plain. Cased in complete mail, his visor down, his lance in its rest, Villena (accompanied by such of his knights as could disentangle themselves from the Moorish foot) charged upon the foe. A moment of fierce shock passed: on the ground lay many a Moor, pierced through by the Christian lance, and on the other side of the foe was heard the voice of Villena: "Saint Jago to the rescue!" But the brave marquis stood almost alone, save his faithful chamberlain, Solier. Several of his knights were dismounted, and swarms of Moors, with lifted knives, gathered round them as they lay, searching for the joints of the armour, which might admit a mortal wound. Gradually, one by one, many of Villena's comrades joined their leader, and now the green mantle of Don Alonzo de Pacheco was seen waving without the copse, and Villena congratulated himself on the safety of his brother. Just at that moment a Moorish cavalier spurred from his troop and met Pacheco in full career. The Moor was not clad, as was the common custom of the Paynim nobles, in the heavy Christian armour; he wore the light, flexible mail of the ancient heroes of Araby or Fez. His turban, which was protected by chains of the finest steel interwoven with the folds, was of the most dazzling white; white also were his tunic and short mantle; on his left arm hung a short circular shield, in his right hand was poised a long and slender lance. As this Moor, mounted on a charger in whose raven hue not a white hair could be detected, dashed forward against Pacheco, both Christian and Moor breathed hard and remained passive. Either nation felt it as a sacrilege to thwart the encounter of champions so renowned.

"God save my brave brother!" muttered Villena, anxiously. "Amen!" said those around him; for all who had ever witnessed the wildest valour in that war trembled as they recognized the dazzling robe and coal-black charger of Muza Ben Abil Gazan. Nor was that renowned infidel mated with an unworthy foe. "Pride of the tournament, and terror of the war," was the favourite title which the knights and ladies of Castile had bestowed on Don Alonzo de Pacheco.

When the Spaniard saw the redoubted Moor approach, he halted abruptly for a moment; and then, wheeling his horse around, took a wider circuit, to give additional impetus to his charge. The Moor, aware of his purpose, halted also, and awaited the moment of his rush; when once more he darted forward, and the combatants met with a skill which called forth a cry of involuntary applause from the Christians themselves. Muza received on the small surface of his shield the ponderous spear of Alonzo, while his own light lance struck upon the helmet of the Christian, and by the exactness of the aim, rather than the weight of the blow, made Alonzo reel in his saddle.

The lances were thrown aside; the long, broad falchion of the Christian, the curved Damascus cineter of the Moor, gleamed in the air. They reined their chargers opposite each other in grave and deliberate silence.

"Yield thee, Sir Knight!" at length cried the fierce Moor; "for the motto on my cineter declares that if thou meetest its stroke, thy days are numbered. The sword of the believer is the Key of Heaven and Hell."¹

"False Paynim," answered Alonzo, in a voice that rang hollow through his helmet, "a Christian knight is the equal of a Moorish army!"

Muza made no reply, but left the rein of his charger on his neck; the noble animal understood the signal, and with a short, impatient cry rushed forward at full speed. Alonzo met the charge with his falchion upraised, and his whole body covered with his shield; the Moor bent, the Spaniards raised a shout, Muza seemed stricken from his horse. But the blow

¹ Such, says Sale, is the poetical phrase of the Mohammedan divines.

of the heavy falchion had not touched him; and, seemingly without an effort, the curved blade of his own cimeter, gliding by that part of his antagonist's throat where the helmet joins the cuirass, passed unresistingly and silently through the joints, and Alonzo fell at once, and without a groan, from his horse, — his armour, to all appearance, unpenetrated, while the blood oozed slow and gurgling from a mortal wound.

"Allah il Allah!" shouted Muza, as he joined his friends; "Lelilies! Lelilies!" echoed the Moors; and ere the Christians recovered their dismay, they were engaged hand to hand with their ferocious and swarming foes. It was, indeed, fearful odds, and it was a marvel to the Spaniards how the Moors had been enabled to harbour and conceal their numbers in so small a space. Horse and foot alike beset the company of Villena, already sadly reduced; and while the infantry, with desperate and savage fierceness, thrust themselves under the very bellies of the chargers, encountering both the hoofs of the steed and the deadly lance of the rider, in the hope of finding a vulnerable place for the sharp Moorish knife, the horsemen, avoiding the stern grapple of the Spanish warriors, harassed them by the shaft and lance, — now advancing, now retreating, and performing, with incredible rapidity, the evolutions of Oriental cavalry. But the life and soul of his party was the indomitable Muza. With a rashness which seemed to the superstitious Spaniards like the safety of a man protected by magic, he spurred his ominous black barb into the very midst of the serried phalanx which Villena endeavoured to form around him, breaking the order by his single charge, and from time to time bringing to the dust some champion of the troop by the noiseless and scarce-seen edge of his fatal cimeter.

Villena, in despair alike of fame and life, and gnawed with grief for his brother's loss, at length resolved to put the last hope of the battle on his single arm. He gave the signal for retreat; and to protect his troop, remained himself, alone and motionless, on his horse, like a statue of iron. Though not of large frame, he was esteemed the best swordsman, next only

to Hernando del Pulgar and Gonsalvo de Cordova, in the army, — practised alike in the heavy assault of the Christian warfare, and the rapid and dexterous exercise of the Moorish cavalry. There he remained, alone and grim, — a lion at bay, — while his troops slowly retreated down the Vega, and their trumpets sounded loud signals of distress and demands for succour to such of their companions as might be within hearing. Villena's armour defied the shafts of the Moors; and as one after one darted towards him, with whirling cimeter and momentary assault, few escaped with impunity from an eye equally quick and a weapon more than equally formidable. Suddenly, a cloud of dust swept towards him; and Muza, a moment before at the farther end of the field, came glittering through that cloud, with his white robe waving and his right arm bare. Villena recognized him, set his teeth hard, and putting spurs to his charger, met the rush. Muza swerved aside just as the heavy falchion swung over his head, and by a back stroke of his own cimeter shore through the cuirass just above the hip-joint, and the blood followed the blade. The brave cavaliers saw the danger of their chief; three of their number darted forward, and came in time to separate the combatants.

Muza stayed not to encounter the new reinforcement; but speeding across the plain, was soon seen rallying his own scattered cavalry, and pouring them down, in one general body, upon the scanty remnant of the Spaniards.

"Our day is come!" said the good knight Villena, with bitter resignation. "Nothing is left for us, my friends, but to give up our lives, — an example how Spanish warriors should live and die. May God and the Holy Mother forgive our sins and shorten our purgatory!"

Just as he spoke, a clarion was heard at a distance, and the sharpened senses of the knights caught the ring of advancing hoofs.

"We are saved!" cried Estevon de Suzon, rising on his stirrups.

While he spoke, the dashing stream of the Moorish horse broke over the little band, and Estevon beheld bent upon

himself the dark eyes and quivering lip of Muza Ben Abil Gazan. That noble knight had never, perhaps, till then known fear; but he felt his heart stand still as he now stood opposed to that irresistible foe.

"The dark fiend guides his blade!" thought De Suzon; "but I was shriven but yesternorn." The thought restored his wonted courage, and he spurred on to meet the cimeter of the Moor.

His assault took Muza by surprise. The Moor's horse stumbled over the ground, cumbered with the dead and slippery with blood, and his uplifted cimeter could not do more than break the force of the gigantic arm of De Suzon as the knight's falchion, bearing down the cimeter, and alighting on the turban of the Mohammedan, clove midway through its folds, arrested only by the admirable temper of the links of steel which protected it. The shock hurled the Moor to the ground; he rolled under the saddle-girths of his antagonist.

"Victory and Saint Jago!" cried the knight; "Muza is —"

The sentence was left eternally unfinished. The blade of the fallen Moor had already pierced De Suzon's horse through a mortal but undefended part. It fell, bearing his rider with him. A moment, and the two champions lay together grappling in the dust; in the next, the short knife which the Moor wore in his girdle had penetrated the Christian's vizor, passing through the brain.

To remount his steed, that remained at hand humbled and motionless, to appear again amongst the thickest of the fray, was a work no less rapidly accomplished than had been the slaughter of the unhappy Estevon de Suzon. But now the fortune of the day was stopped in a progress hitherto so triumphant to the Moors.

Pricking fast over the plain were seen the glittering horsemen of the Christian reinforcements; and at the remoter distance, the royal banner of Spain, indistinctly descried through volumes of dust, denoted that Ferdinand himself was advancing to the support of his cavaliers.

The Moors, however, who had themselves received many

and mysterious reinforcements, which seemed to spring up like magic from the bosom of the earth, — so suddenly and unexpectedly had they emerged from copse and cleft in that mountainous and entangled neighbourhood, — were not unprepared for a fresh foe. At the command of the vigilant Muza they drew off, fell into order, and seizing, while yet there was time, the vantage-ground which inequalities of the soil and the shelter of the trees gave to their darts and agile horse, they presented an array which Ponce de Leon himself, who now arrived, deemed it more prudent not to assault. While Villena, in accents almost inarticulate with rage, was urging the Marquis of Cadiz to advance, Ferdinand, surrounded by the flower of his court, arrived at the rear of the troops, and after a few words interchanged with Ponce de Leon, gave the signal of retreat.

When the Moors beheld that noble soldiery slowly breaking ground and retiring towards the camp, even Muza could not control their ardour. They rushed forward, harassing the retreat of the Christians, and delaying the battle by various skirmishes.

It was at this time that the headlong valour of Hernando del Pulgar, who had arrived with Ponce de Leon, distinguished itself in feats which yet live in the songs of Spain. Mounted upon an immense steed, and himself of colossal strength, he was seen charging alone upon the assailants, and scattering numbers to the ground with the sweep of his enormous two-handed falchion. With a loud voice he called on Muza to oppose him; but the Moor, fatigued with slaughter, and scarcely recovered from the shock of his encounter with De Suzon, reserved so formidable a foe for a future contest.

It was at this juncture, while the field was covered with straggling skirmishers, that a small party of Spaniards, in cutting their way to the main body of their countrymen through one of the numerous copses held by the enemy, fell in at the outskirt with an equal number of Moors, and engaged them in a desperate conflict, hand to hand. Amidst the infidels was one man who took no part in the affray. At

a little distance, he gazed for a few moments upon the fierce and relentless slaughter of Moor and Christian with a smile of stern and complacent delight; and then, taking advantage of the general confusion, rode gently and, as he hoped, unobserved away from the scene. But he was not destined so quietly to escape. A Spaniard perceived him, and from something strange and unusual in his garb, judged him one of the Moorish leaders; and presently Almamen, for it was he, beheld before him the uplifted falchion of a foe neither disposed to give quarter nor to hear parley. Brave though the Israelite was, many reasons concurred to prevent his taking a personal part against the soldier of Spain; and seeing he should have no chance of explanation, he fairly put spurs to his horse and galloped across the plain. The Spaniard followed, gained upon him, and Almamen at length turned in despair and the wrath of his haughty nature.

"Have thy will, fool!" said he, between his grinded teeth, as he gripped his dagger and prepared for the conflict. It was long and obstinate, for the Spaniard was skilful; and the Hebrew, wearing no mail, and without any weapon more formidable than a sharp and well-tempered dagger, was forced to act cautiously on the defensive. At length the combatants grappled, and by a dexterous thrust the short blade of Almamen pierced the throat of his antagonist, who fell prostrate to the ground.

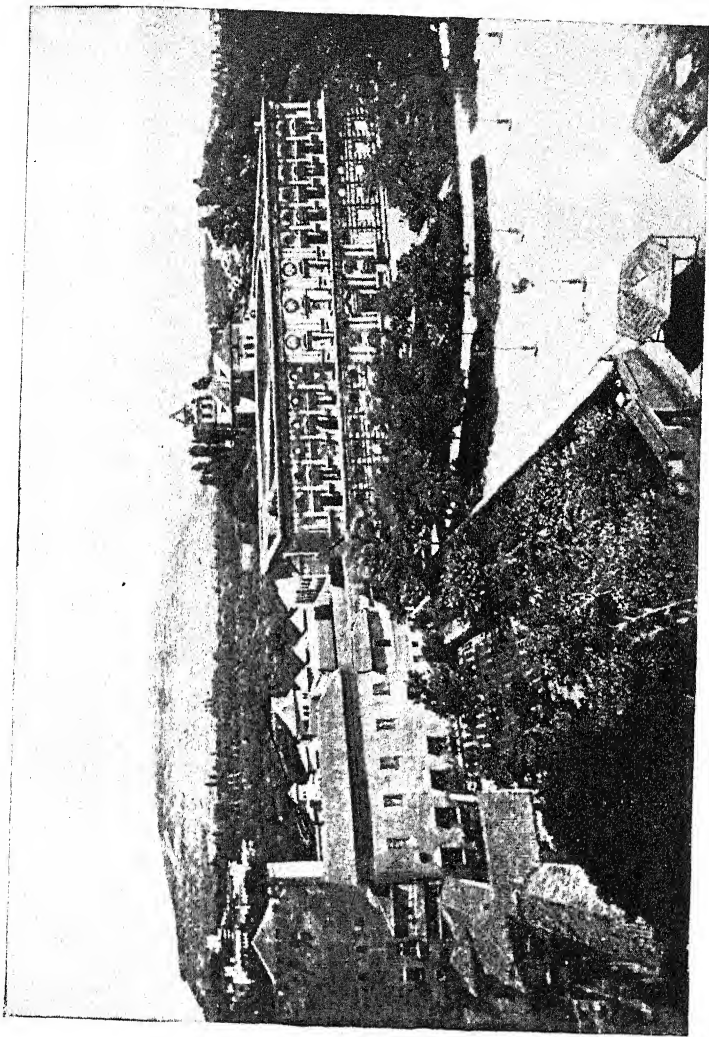
"I am safe," he thought, as he wheeled round his horse; when lo, the Spaniards he had just left behind, and who had now routed their antagonists, were upon him.

"Yield, or die!" cried the leader of the troop.

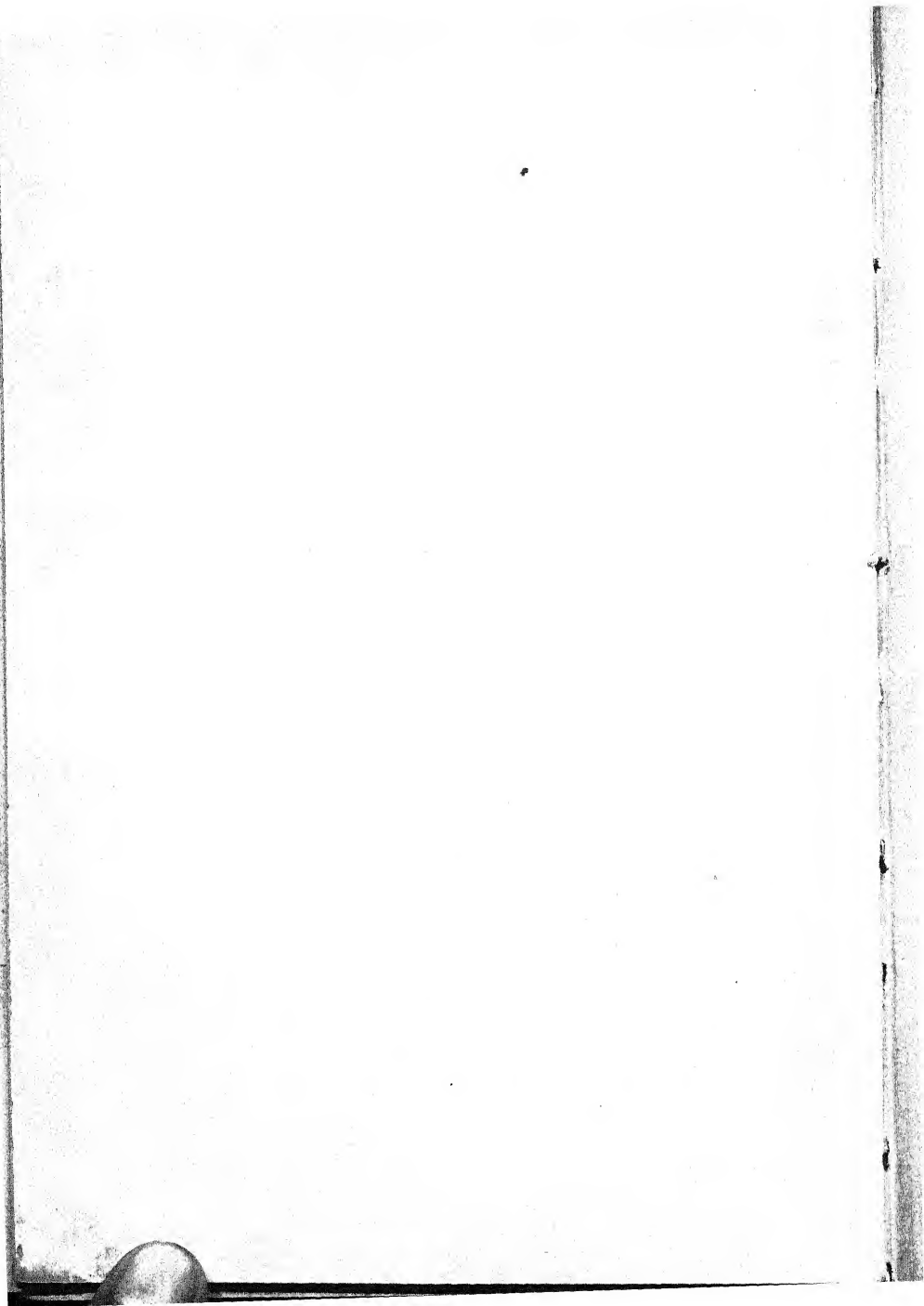
Almamen glared round; no succour was at hand. "I am not your enemy," said he sullenly, throwing down his weapon, — "bear me to your camp."

A trooper seized his rein, and, scouring along, the Spaniards soon reached the retreating army.

Meanwhile the evening darkened, the shout and the roar grew gradually less and less loud. The battle had ceased; the stragglers had joined their several standards; and by the light of the first star the Moorish force, bearing their wounded



GENERAL VIEW OF THE ALHAMBRA FROM THE TOWER OF HOMENAJE.



brethren, and elated with success, re-entered the gates of Granada as the black charger of the hero of the day, closing the rear of the cavalry, disappeared within the gloomy portals.

CHAPTER III.

THE HERO IN THE POWER OF THE DREAMER.

It was in the same chamber, and nearly at the same hour, in which we first presented to the reader Boabdil el Chico that we are again admitted to the presence of that ill-starred monarch. He was not alone. His favourite slave, Amine, reclined upon the ottomans, gazing with anxious love upon his thoughtful countenance as he leaned against the glittering wall by the side of the casement, gazing abstractedly on the scene below.

From afar he heard the shouts of the populace at the return of Muza, and bursts of artillery confirmed the tidings of triumph which had already been borne to his ear.

"May the king live forever!" said Amine, timidly; "his armies have gone forth to conquer."

"But without their king," replied Boabdil, bitterly, "and headed by a traitor and a foe. I am meshed in the nets of an inextricable fate!"

"Oh," said the slave, with sudden energy, as, clasping her hands, she rose from her couch, — "oh, my lord, would that these humble lips dared utter other words than those of love!"

"And what wise counsel would they give me?" asked Boabdil, with a faint smile. "Speak on."

"I will obey thee, then, even if it displease," cried Amine; and she rose, her cheek glowing, her eyes sparkling, her beautiful form dilated. "I am a daughter of Granada, I am the beloved of a king; I will be true to my birth and to my fortunes.

Boabdil el Chico, the last of a line of heroes, shake off these gloomy fantasies, these doubts and dreams that smother the fire of a great nature and a kingly soul! Awake, arise, rob Granada of her Muza; be thyself her Muza! Trustest thou to magic and to spells? Then grave them on thy breastplate, write them on thy sword, and live no longer the Dreamer of the Alhambra, become the saviour of thy people!"

Boabdil turned and gazed on the inspired and beautiful form before him with mingled emotions of surprise and shame. "Out of the mouth of woman cometh my rebuke," said he, sadly. "It is well!"

"Pardon me, pardon me!" said the slave, falling humbly at his knees; "but blame me not that I would have thee worthy of thyself. Wert thou not happier, was not thy heart more light and thy hope more strong when, at the head of thine armies, thine own cimeter slew thine own foes, and the terror of the Hero-king spread, in flame and slaughter, from the mountains to the seas. Boabdil, dear as thou art to me, —equally as I would have loved thee hadst thou been born a lowly fisherman of the Darro, —since thou art a king, I would have thee die a king, even if my own heart broke as I armed thee for thy latest battle!"

"Thou knowest not what thou sayest, Amine," said Boabdil, "nor canst thou tell what spirits that are not of earth dictate to the actions and watch over the destinies of the rulers of nations. If I delay, if I linger, it is not from terror, but from wisdom. The cloud must gather on, dark and slow, ere the moment for the thunderbolt arrives."

"On thine own house will the thunderbolt fall, since over thine own house thou sufferest the cloud to gather," said a calm and stern voice.

Boabdil started; and in the chamber stood a third person, in the shape of a woman, past middle age, and of commanding port and stature. Upon her long-descending robes of embroidered purple were thickly woven jewels of royal price, and her dark hair, slightly tinged with gray, parted over a majestic brow, while a small diadem surmounted the folds of the turban.

"My mother," said Boabdil, with some haughty reserve in his tone, "your presence is unexpected."

"Ay," answered Ayxa la Horra, — for it was indeed that celebrated and haughty and high-souled queen, — "and unwelcome; so is ever that of your true friends. But not thus unwelcome was the presence of your mother when her brain and her hand delivered you from the dungeon in which your stern father had cast your youth, and the dagger and the bowl seemed the only keys that would unlock the cell."

"And better hadst thou left the ill-omened son that thy womb conceived to die thus in youth, honoured and lamented, than to live to manhood, wrestling against an evil star and a relentless fate."

"Son," said the queen, gazing upon him with lofty and half disdainful compassion, "men's conduct shapes out their own fortunes, and the unlucky are never the valiant and the wise."

"Madam," said Boabdil, colouring with passion, "I am still a king, nor will I be thus bearded. Withdraw!"

Ere the queen could reply, a eunuch entered, and whispered Boabdil.

"Ha!" said he, joyfully, stamping his foot, "comes he then to brave the lion in his den? Let the rebel look to it. Is he alone?"

"Alone, great king."

"Bid my guards wait without; let the slightest signal summon them. Amine, retire! Madam —"

"Son!" interrupted Ayxa la Horra, in visible agitation, "do I guess aright? Is the brave Muza, the sole bulwark and hope of Granada, whom unjustly thou wouldst last night have placed in chains (chains! Great Prophet, is it thus a king should reward his heroes?), — is, I say, Muza here, and wilt thou make him the victim of his own generous trust?"

"Retire, woman," said Boabdil, sullenly.

"I will not, save by force. I resisted a fiercer soul than thine when I saved thee from thy father."

"Remain, then, if thou wilt, and learn how kings can punish traitors. Mesnour, admit the hero of Granada."

Amine had vanished. Boabdil seated himself on the

cushions, his face calm but pale. The queen stood erect at a little distance, her arms folded on her breast, and her aspect knit and resolute. In a few moments Muza entered, alone. He approached the king with the profound salutation of Oriental obeisance, and then stood before him with down-cast eyes, in an attitude from which respect could not divorce a natural dignity and pride of mien.

"Prince," said Boabdil, after a moment's pause, "yestern-morn, when I sent for thee, thou didst brave my orders. Even in mine own Alhambra thy minions broke out in mutiny; they surrounded the fortress in which thou wert to wait my pleasure; they intercepted, they insulted, they drove back my guards; they stormed the towers protected by the banner of thy king. The governor, a coward or a traitor, rendered thee to the rebellious crowd. Was this all? No, by the Prophet. Thou, by right my captive, didst leave thy prison but to head mine armies. And this day the traitor subject, the secret foe, was the leader of a people who defy a king. This night thou comest to me unsought. Thou feelest secure from my just wrath, even in my palace. Thine insolence blinds and betrays thee. Man, thou art in my power! Ho, there!"

As the king spoke, he rose; and presently the arcades at the back of the pavilion were darkened by long lines of the Ethiopian guard, each of height which, beside the slight Moorish race, appeared gigantic, — stolid and passionless machines, to execute, without thought, the bloodiest or the slightest caprice of despotism. There they stood, their silver breastplates and long earrings contrasting their dusky skins, and bearing over their shoulders immense clubs studded with brazen nails.

A little advanced from the rest stood the captain, with the fatal bowstring hanging carelessly on his arm, and his eyes intent to catch the slightest gesture of the king.

"Behold!" said Boabdil to his prisoner.

"I do, and am prepared for what I have foreseen."

The queen grew pale, but continued silent.

Muza resumed.

"Lord of the faithful!" said he, "if yesternorn I had acted otherwise, it would have been to the ruin of thy throne and our common race. The fierce Zegris suspected and learned my capture. They summoned the troops; they delivered me, it is true. At that time had I reasoned with them, it would have been as drops upon a flame. They were bent on besieging thy palace, — perhaps upon demanding thy abdication. I could not stifle their fury, but I could direct it. In the moment of passion I led them from rebellion against our common king to victory against our common foe. That duty done, I come, unscathed from the sword of the Christian, to bare my neck to the bowstring of my friend. Alone, untracked, unsuspected, I have entered thy palace, to prove to the sovereign of Granada that the defendant of his throne is not a rebel to his will. Now summon the guards; I have done."

"Muza," said Boabdil, in a softened voice, while he shaded his face with his hand, "we played together as children, and I have loved thee well. My kingdom even now, perchance, is passing from me; but I could almost be reconciled to that loss, if I thought thy loyalty had not left me."

"Dost thou in truth suspect the faith of Muza Ben Abil Gazan?" said the Moorish prince, in a tone of surprise and sorrow. "Unhappy king! I deemed that my services, and not my defection, made my crime."

"Why do my people hate me? Why do my armies menace?" said Boabdil, evasively. "Why should a subject possess that allegiance which a king cannot obtain?"

"Because," replied Muza, boldly, "the king has delegated to a subject the command he should himself assume. Oh, Boabdil," he continued passionately, "friend of my boyhood ere the evil days came upon us, gladly would I sink to rest beneath the dark waves of yonder river if thy arm and brain would fill up my place amongst the warriors of Granada. And think not I say this only from our boyish love; think not I have placed my life in thy hands only from that servile loyalty to a single man which the false chivalry of Christendom imposes as a sacred creed upon its knights and nobles."

But I speak and act but from one principle, — to save the religion of my father and the land of my birth. For this I have risked my life against the foe; for this I surrender my life to the sovereign of my country. Granada may yet survive, if monarch and people unite together; Granada is lost forever if her children at this fatal hour are divided against themselves. If, then, I, O Boabdil, am the true obstacle to thy league with thine own subjects, give me at once to the bowstring, and my sole prayer shall be for the last remnant of the Moorish name, and the last monarch of the Moorish dynasty."

"My son, my son, art thou convinced at last?" cried the queen, struggling with her tears; for she was one who wept easily at heroic sentiments, but never at the softer sorrows or from the more womanly emotions.

Boabdil lifted his head with a vain and momentary attempt at pride; his eye glanced from his mother to his friend, and his better feelings gushed upon him with irresistible force. He threw himself into Muza's arms.

"Forgive me," he said, in broken accents, "forgive me! How could I have wronged thee thus? Yes," he continued, as he started from the noble breast on which for a moment he indulged no ungenerous weakness, — "yes, prince, your example shames, but it fires me. Granada henceforth shall have two chieftains; and if I be jealous of thee, it shall be from an emulation thou canst not blame. Guards, retire. Mesnour! ho, Mesnour! Proclaim at daybreak that I myself will review the troops in the Vivarrambla. Yet," and as he spoke his voice faltered and his brow became overcast, — "yet stay, seek me thyself at daybreak, and I will give thee my commands."

"Oh, my son, why hesitate," cried the queen, "why waver? Prosecute thine own kingly designs, and —"

"Hush, madam," said Boabdil, regaining his customary cold composure; "and since you are now satisfied with your son, leave me alone with Muza."

The queen sighed heavily; but there was something in the calm of Boabdil which chilled and awed her more than his

bursts of passion. She drew her veil around her, and passed slowly and reluctantly from the chamber.

"Muza," said Boabdil, when alone with the prince, and fixing his large and thoughtful eyes upon the dark orbs of his companion, "when, in our younger days, we conversed together, do you remember how often that converse turned upon those solemn and mysterious themes to which the sages of our ancestral land directed their deepest lore, — the enigmas of the stars, the science of fate, the wild searches into the clouded future which hides the destinies of nations and of men? Thou rememberest, Muza, that to such studies mine own vicissitudes and sorrows, even in childhood, the strange fortunes which gave me in my cradle the epithet of El Zogoybi, the ominous predictions of santons and astrologers as to the trials of my earthly fate, — all contributed to incline my soul. Thou didst not despise those earnest musings nor our ancestral lore, though, unlike me, ever more inclined to action than to contemplation, that which thou mightest believe had little influence upon what thou didst design. With me it hath been otherwise, — every event of life hath conspired to feed my early prepossessions; and in this awful crisis of my fate I have placed myself and my throne rather under the guardianship of spirits than of men. This alone has reconciled me to inaction, to the torpor of the Alhambra, to the mutinies of my people. I have smiled when foes surrounded and friends deserted me, secure of the aid at last, — if I bided but the fortunate hour, — of the charms of protecting spirits and the swords of the invisible creation. Thou wonderest what this should lead to. Listen! Two nights since," and the king shuddered, "I was with the dead! My father appeared before me, not as I knew him in life, — gaunt and terrible, full of the vigour of health and the strength of kingly empire and of fierce passion, — but wan, calm, shadowy. From lips on which Azrael had set his livid seal he bade me beware of *thee*!"

The king ceased suddenly, and sought to read on the face of Muza the effect his words produced. But the proud and swarthy features of the Moor evinced no pang of conscience;

a slight smile of pity might have crossed his lip for a moment, but it vanished ere the king could detect it. Boabdil continued.

"Under the influence of this warning, I issued the order for thy arrest. Let this pass, — I resume my tale. I attempted to throw myself at the spectre's feet; it glided from me, motionless and impalpable. I asked the Dead One if he forgave his unhappy son the sin of rebellion, — alas! too well requited even upon earth. And the voice again came forth, and bade me keep the crown that I had gained, as the sole atonement for the past. Then again I asked whether the hour for action had arrived. And the spectre, while it faded gradually into air, answered, 'No.' 'Oh,' I exclaimed, 'ere thou leavest me, be one sign accorded me that I have not dreamed this vision; and give me, I pray thee, note and warning when the evil star of Boabdil shall withhold its influence, and he may strike, without resistance from the Powers above, for his glory and his throne.' 'The sign and the warning are bequeathed thee,' answered the ghostly image. It vanished; thick darkness fell around, and when once more the light of the lamps we bore became visible, behold there stood before me a skeleton in the regal robe of the kings of Granada, and on its grisly head was the imperial diadem. With one hand raised, it pointed to the opposite wall, wherein burned, like an orb of gloomy fire, a broad dial-plate, on which were graven these words: 'BEWARE; FEAR NOT; ARM!' The finger of the dial moved rapidly round, and rested at the word 'beware.' From that hour to the one in which I last beheld it, it hath not moved. Muza, the tale is done. Wilt thou visit with me this enchanted chamber, and see if the hour be come?"

"Commander of the faithful," said Muza, "the story is dread and awful. But pardon thy friend, — wert thou alone, or was the santón Almamen thy companion?"

"Why the question?" said Boabdil, evasively, and slightly colouring.

"I fear his truth," answered Muza. "The Christian king conquers more foes by craft than force, and his spies are more

deadly than his warriors. Wherefore this caution against me, but (pardon me) for thine own undoing? Were I a traitor, could Ferdinand himself have endangered thy crown so imminently as the revenge of the leader of thine own armies? Why, too, this desire to keep thee inactive? For the brave every hour hath its chances; but for us, every hour increases our peril. If we seize not the present time, our supplies are cut off, —and famine is a foe all our valour cannot resist. This dervise, who is he? A stranger, not of our race and blood. But this morning I found him without the walls, not far from the Spaniards' camp."

"Ha!" cried the king, quickly, "and what said he?"

"Little, but in hints, —sheltering himself, by loose hints, under thy name."

"He! What dared he own? Muza, what were those hints?"

The Moor here recounted the interview with Almamen, his detention, his inactivity in the battle, and his subsequent capture by the Spaniards. The king listened attentively, and regained his composure.

"It is a strange and awful man," said he, after a pause. "Guards and chains will not detain him. Ere long he will return. But thou at least, Muza, art henceforth free, alike from the suspicion of the living and the warnings of the dead. No, my friend," continued Boabdil, with generous warmth, "it is better to lose a crown, to lose life itself, than confidence in a heart like thine. Come, let us inspect this magic tablet; perchance — and how my heart bounds as I utter the hope! — the hour may have arrived."

CHAPTER IV.

A FULLER VIEW OF THE CHARACTER OF BOABDIL. — MUZA
IN THE GARDENS OF HIS BELOVED.

MUZA BEN ABIL GAZAN returned from his visit to Boabdil with a thoughtful and depressed spirit. His arguments had failed to induce the king to disdain the command of the magic dial, which still forebade him to arm against the invaders; and although the royal favour was no longer withdrawn from himself, the Moor felt that such favour hung upon a capricious and uncertain tenure so long as his sovereign was the slave of superstition or imposture. But that noble warrior, whose character the adversity of his country had singularly exalted and refined, even while increasing its natural fierceness, thought little of himself in comparison with the evils and misfortunes which the king's continued irresolution must bring upon Granada.

"So brave, and yet so weak," thought he; "so weak, and yet so obstinate; so wise a reasoner, yet so credulous a dupe! Unhappy Boabdil, the stars indeed seem to fight against thee, and their influences at thy birth marred all thy gifts and virtues with counteracting infirmity and error."

Muza — more, perhaps, than any subject in Granada — did justice to the real character of the king; but even he was unable to penetrate all its complicated and latent mysteries. Boabdil el Chico was no ordinary man. His affections were warm and generous, his nature calm and gentle; and though early power and the painful experience of a mutinous people and ungrateful court had imparted to that nature an irascibility of temper and a quickness of suspicion foreign to its earlier soil, he was easily led back to generosity and justice; and if warm in resentment, was magnanimous in forgiveness. Deeply accomplished in all the learning of his race and time,

he was — in books, at least — a philosopher; and, indeed, his attachment to the abstruser studies was one of the main causes which unfitted him for his present station. But it was the circumstances attendant on his birth and childhood that had perverted his keen and graceful intellect to morbid indulgence in mystic reveries and all the doubt, fear, and irresolution of a man who pushes metaphysics into the supernatural world. Dark prophecies accumulated omens over his head; men united in considering him born to disastrous destinies. Whenever he had sought to wrestle against hostile circumstances, some seemingly accidental cause, sudden and unforeseen, had blasted the labours of his most vigorous energy, the fruit of his most deliberate wisdom. Thus, by degrees a gloomy and despairing cloud settled over his mind; but secretly sceptical of the Mohammedan creed, and too proud and sanguine to resign himself wholly and passively to the doctrine of inevitable predestination, he sought to contend against the machinations of hostile demons and boding stars, not by human, but spiritual agencies. Collecting around him the seers and magicians of Orient-fanaticism, he lived in the visions of another world; and flattered by the promises of impostors or dreamers, and deceived by his own subtle and brooding tendencies of mind, it was amongst spells and cabala that he thought to draw forth the mighty secret which was to free him from the meshes of the preternatural enemies of his fortune, and leave him the freedom of other men to wrestle, with equal chances, against peril and adversities. It was thus that Almamen had won the mastery over his mind; and though upon matters of common and earthly import or solid learning, Boabdil could contend with sages, upon those of superstition he could be fooled by a child. He was in this a kind of Hamlet, formed, under prosperous and serene fortunes, to render blessings and reap renown, but over whom the chilling shadow of another world had fallen, whose soul curdled back into itself, whose life had been separated from that of the herd, whom doubts and awe drew back, while circumstances impelled onward, whom a supernatural doom invested with a peculiar philosophy, not of human effect and

cause, and who, with every gift that could ennoble and adorn, was suddenly palsied into that mortal imbecility which is almost ever the result of mortal visitings into the haunted regions of the Ghostly and Unknown. The gloomier colourings of his mind had been deepened, too, by secret remorse. For the preservation of his own life, constantly threatened by his unnatural predecessor, he had been early driven into rebellion against his father. In age, infirmity, and blindness, that fierce king had been made a prisoner at Salobrena by his brother, El Zagal, Boabdil's partner in rebellion; and dying suddenly, El Zagal was suspected of his murder. Though Boabdil was innocent of such a crime, he felt himself guilty of the causes which led to it; and a dark memory, resting upon his conscience, served to augment his superstition and enervate the vigour of his resolves: for of all things that make men dreamers, none is so effectual as remorse operating upon a thoughtful temperament.

Revolving the character of his sovereign, and sadly foreboding the ruin of his country, the young hero of Granada pursued his way until his steps, almost unconsciously, led him towards the abode of Leila. He scaled the walls of the garden as before, he neared the house. All was silent and deserted; his signal was unanswered, his murmured song brought no grateful light to the lattice, no fairy footstep to the balcony. Dejected and sad of heart, he retired from the spot, and returning home, sought a couch, to which even all the fatigue and excitement he had undergone could not win the forgetfulness of slumber. The mystery that wrapped the maiden of his homage, the rareness of their interviews, and the wild and poetical romance that made a very principle of the chivalry of the Spanish Moors, had imparted to Muza's love for Leila a passionate depth which at this day, and in more enervated climes, is unknown to the Mohammedan lover. His keenest inquiries had been unable to pierce the secret of her birth and station. Little of the inmates of that guarded and lonely house was known in the neighbourhood; the only one ever seen without its walls was an old man of the Jewish faith, supposed to be a superintendent of the for-

eign slaves (for no Mohammedan slave would have been subjected to the insult of submission to a Jew); and though there were rumours of the vast wealth and gorgeous luxury within the mansion, it was supposed the abode of some Moorish emir absent from the city, and the interest of the gossips was at this time absorbed in more weighty matters than the affairs of a neighbour. But when, the next eve, and the next, Muza returned to the spot equally in vain, his impatience and alarm could no longer be restrained; he resolved to lie in watch by the portals of the house night and day until at least he could discover some one of the inmates whom he could question of his love, and perhaps bribe to his service. As with this resolution he was hovering round the mansion, he beheld, stealing from a small door in one of the low wings of the house, a bended and decrepit form. It supported its steps upon a staff; and as, now entering the garden, it stooped by the side of a fountain to cull flowers and herbs by the light of the moon, the Moor almost started to behold a countenance which resembled that of some ghoul or vampire haunting the places of the dead. He smiled at his own fear, and with a quick and stealthy pace hastened through the trees, and gaining the spot where the old man bent, placed his hand on his shoulder ere his presence was perceived.

Ximen — for it was he — looked round eagerly, and a faint cry of terror broke from his lips.

"Hush!" said the Moor; "fear me not, I am a friend. Thou art old, man, — gold is ever welcome to the aged." As he spoke, he dropped several broad pieces into the breast of the Jew, whose ghastly features gave forth a yet more ghastly smile as he received the gift, and mumbled forth, —

"Charitable young man; generous, benevolent, excellent young man!"

"Now, then," said Muza, "tell me — you belong to this house — Leila, the maiden within — tell me of her, — is she well?"

"I trust so," returned the Jew; "I trust so, noble master."

"Trust so! *Know* you not of her state?"

"Not I; for many nights I have not seen her, excellent

sir," answered Ximen, — "she hath left Granada, she hath gone. You waste your time and mar your precious health amidst these nightly dews; they are unwholesome, very unwholesome, at the time of the new moon."

"Gone!" echoed the Moor; "left Granada! Woe is me! And whither? There, there, more gold for you: old man, tell me whither?"

"Alas! I know not, most magnanimous young man. I am but a servant; I know nothing."

"When will she return?"

"I cannot tell thee."

"Who is thy master? Who owns yon mansion?"

Ximen's countenance fell; he looked round in doubt and fear, and then, after a short pause, answered: "A wealthy man, good sir, — a Moor of Africa; but he hath also gone; he but seldom visits us: Granada is not so peaceful a residence as it was. I would go too, if I could."

Muza released his hold of Ximen, who gazed at the Moor's working countenance with a malignant smile; for Ximen hated all men.

"Thou hast done with me, young warrior? Pleasant dreams to thee under the new moon, — thou hadst best retire to thy bed. Farewell; bless thy charity to the poor old man!"

Muza heard him not; he remained motionless for some moments, and then with a heavy sigh, as that of one who has gained the mastery of himself after a bitter struggle, he said half aloud, "Allah be with thee, Leila! Granada now is my only mistress."

CHAPTER V.

BOABDIL'S RECONCILIATION WITH HIS PEOPLE.

SEVERAL days had elapsed without any encounter between Moor and Christian; for Ferdinand's cold and sober policy, warned by the loss he had sustained in the ambush of Muza,

was now bent on preserving rigorous restraint upon the fiery spirits he commanded. He forbade all parties of skirmish, — in which the Moors, indeed, had usually gained the advantage, — and contented himself with occupying all the passes through which provisions could arrive at the besieged city. He commenced strong fortifications around his camp, and forbidding assault on the Moors, defied it against himself.

Meanwhile, Almamen had not returned to Granada. No tidings of his fate reached the king; and his prolonged disappearance began to produce visible and salutary effect upon the long dormant energies of Boabdil. The counsels of Muza, the exhortations of the queen-mother, the enthusiasm of his mistress, Amine, uncounteracted by the arts of the magician, aroused the torpid lion of his nature. But still his army and his subjects murmured against him, and his appearance in the Vivarrambla might possibly be the signal of revolt. It was at this time that a most fortunate circumstance at once restored to him the confidence and affections of his people. His stern uncle, El Zagal, — once a rival for his crown, and whose daring valour, mature age, and military sagacity had won him a powerful party within the city, — had been some months since conquered by Ferdinand; and in yielding the possessions he held, had been rewarded with a barren and dependent principality. His defeat, far from benefiting Boabdil, had exasperated the Moors against their king. "For," said they, almost with one voice, "the brave El Zagal never would have succumbed, had Boabdil properly supported his arms." And it was the popular discontent and rage at El Zagal's defeat which had, indeed, served Boabdil with a reasonable excuse for shutting himself in the strong fortress of the Alhambra. It now happened that El Zagal, whose dominant passion was hatred of his nephew, and whose fierce nature chafed at its present cage, resolved, in his old age, to blast all his former fame by a signal treason to his country. Forgetting everything but revenge against his nephew, who he was resolved should share his own ruin, he armed his subjects, crossed the country, and appeared at the head of a gallant troop in the Spanish camp, an ally with Ferdinand against

Granada. When this was heard by the Moors, it is impossible to conceive their indignant wrath. The crime of El Zagal produced an instantaneous reaction in favour of Boabdil; the crowd surrounded the Alhambra, and with prayers and tears entreated the forgiveness of the king. This event completed the conquest of Boabdil over his own irresolution. He ordained an assembly of the whole army in the broad space of the Vivarrambla; and when at break of day he appeared in full armour in the square, with Muza at his right hand, himself in the flower of youthful beauty, and proud to feel once more a hero and a king, the joy of the people knew no limit; the air was rent with cries of "Long live Boabdil el Chico!" and the young monarch, turning to Muza, with his soul upon his brow exclaimed, "The hour has come: I am no longer El Zogoybi!"

CHAPTER VI.

LEILA. — HER NEW LOVER. — PORTRAIT OF THE FIRST INQUISITOR OF SPAIN. — THE CHALICE RETURNED TO THE LIPS OF ALMAMEN.

WHILE thus the state of events within Granada, the course of our story transports us back to the Christian camp. It was in one of a long line of tents that skirted the pavilion of Isabel, and was appropriated to the ladies attendant on the royal presence, that a young female sat alone. The dusk of evening already gathered around, and only the outline of her form and features was visible. But even that, imperfectly seen, — the dejected attitude of the form, the drooping head, the hands clasped upon the knees, — might have sufficed to denote the melancholy nature of the reverie which the maid indulged.

"Ah," thought she, "to what danger am I exposed! If my father, if my lover, dreamed of the persecution to which their poor Leila is abandoned!"

A few tears, large and bitter, broke from her eyes and stole unheeded down her cheek. At that moment the deep and musical chime of a bell was heard summoning the chiefs of the army to prayer; for Ferdinand invested all his worldly schemes with a religious covering, and to his politic war he sought to give the imposing character of a sacred crusade.

"That sound," thought she, sinking on her knees, "summons the Nazarenes to the presence of their God. It reminds me, a captive by the waters of Babylon, that God is ever with the friendless. Oh, succour and defend me, Thou who didst look of old upon Ruth standing amidst the corn, and didst watch over Thy chosen people in the hungry wilderness and in the stranger's land."

Rapt in her mute and passionate devotions, Leila remained long in her touching posture. The bell had ceased, all without was hushed and still, when the drapery stretched across the opening of the tent was lifted, and a young Spaniard, cloaked from head to foot in a long mantle, stood within the space. He gazed in silence upon the kneeling maiden, nor was it until she rose that he made his presence audible.

"Ah, fairest," said he, then, as he attempted to take her hand, "thou wilt not answer my letters, — see me, then, at thy feet. It is thou who teachest me to kneel."

"You, prince!" said Leila, agitated, and in great and evident fear. "Why harass and insult me thus? Am I not sacred as a hostage and a charge? And are name, honour, peace, and all that woman is taught to hold most dear, to be thus robbed from me under the pretext of a love dishonouring to thee and an insult to myself?"

"Sweet one," answered Don Juan, with a slight laugh, "thou hast learned, within yonder walls, a creed of morals little known to Moorish maidens, if fame belies them not. Suffer me to teach thee easier morality and sounder logic. It is no dishonour to a Christian prince to adore beauty like thine; it is no insult to a maiden hostage if the Infant of Spain proffer her the homage of his heart. But we waste time. Spies and envious tongues and vigilant eyes are around us; and it is not often that I can baffle them as I have done

now. Fairest, hear me!" and this time he succeeded in seizing the hand which vainly struggled against his clasp. "Nay, why so coy? What can female heart desire that my love cannot shower upon thine? Speak but the word, enchanting maiden, and I will bear thee from these scenes unseemly to thy gentle eyes. Amidst the pavilions of princes shalt thou repose, and amidst gardens of the orange and the rose shalt thou listen to the vows of thine adorer. Surely in these arms thou wilt not pine for a barbarous home and a fated city. And if thy pride, sweet maiden, deafen thee to the voice of Nature, learn that the haughtiest dames of Spain would bend, in envious court, to the beloved of their future king. This night—listen to me—I say, listen—this night I will bear thee hence. Be but mine, and no matter whether heretic or infidel, or whatever the priests style thee, neither church nor king shall tear thee from the bosom of thy lover."

"It is well spoken, son of the most Christian monarch!" said a deep voice; and the Dominican, Tomas de Torquemada, stood before the prince.

Juan, as if struck by a thunderbolt, released his hold, and, staggering back a few paces, seemed to cower, abashed and humbled, before the eye of the priest as it glared upon him through the gathering darkness.

"Prince," said the friar, after a pause, "not to thee will our Holy Church attribute this crime; thy pious heart hath been betrayed by sorcery. Retire!"

"Father," said the prince, in a tone into which, despite his awe of that terrible man, THE FIRST GRAND INQUISITOR OF SPAIN, his libertine spirit involuntarily forced itself, in a half latent raillery, "sorcery of eyes like those bewitched the wise son of a more pious sire than even Ferdinand of Arragon."

"He blasphemeth," muttered the monk. "Prince, beware! You know not what you do."

The prince lingered, and then, as if aware that he must yield, gathered his cloak round him and left the tent without reply.

Pale and trembling, — with fears no less felt, perhaps, though more vague and perplexed, than those from which she had just been delivered, — Leila stood before the monk.

"Be seated, daughter of the faithless," said Torquemada; "we would converse with thee. And as thou valuest — I say not thy soul, for, alas! of that precious treasure thou art not conscious — but mark me, woman! as thou prizest the safety of those delicate limbs and that wanton beauty, answer truly what I shall ask thee. The man who brought thee hither, is he in truth thy father?"

"Alas!" answered Leila, almost fainting with terror at this rude and menacing address, "he is, in truth, mine only parent."

"And his faith, his religion?"

"I have never beheld him pray."

"Hem! he never prays, — a noticeable fact. But of what sect, what creed, does he profess himself?"

"I cannot answer thee."

"Nay, there be means that may wring from thee an answer. Maiden, be not so stubborn; speak! Thinkest thou he serves the temple of the Mohammedan?"

"No, oh, no," answered poor Leila, eagerly, deeming that her reply in this, at least, would be acceptable. "He disowns, he scorns, he abhors, the Moorish faith. Even," she added, "with too fierce a zeal."

"Thou dost not share that zeal, then? Well, worships he in secret after the Christian rites?"

Leila hung her head, and answered not.

"I understand thy silence. And in what belief, maiden, wert thou reared beneath his roof?"

"I know not what it is called among men," answered Leila, with firmness, "but it is the faith of the ONE GOD, who protects His chosen and shall avenge their wrongs, — the God who made earth and heaven, and who, in an idolatrous and benighted world, transmitted the knowledge of Himself and His holy laws from age to age through the channel of one solitary people in the plains of Palestine and by the waters of the Hebron."

"And in that faith thou wert trained, maiden, by thy father?" said the Dominican, calmly. "I am satisfied. Rest here in peace; we may meet again soon."

The last words were spoken with a soft and tranquil smile,

—a smile in which glazing eyes and agonizing hearts had often beheld the ghastly omen of the torture and the stake.

On quitting the unfortunate Leila, the monk took his way towards the neighbouring tent of Ferdinand. But ere he reached it, a new thought seemed to strike the holy man; he altered the direction of his steps, and gained one of those little shrines common in Catholic countries, and which had been hastily built of wood, in the centre of a small copse and by the side of a brawling rivulet, towards the back of the king's pavilion. But one solitary sentry, at the entrance of the copse, guarded the consecrated place; and its exceeding loneliness and quiet were a grateful contrast to the animated world of the surrounding camp. The monk entered the shrine, and fell down on his knees before an image of the Virgin, rudely sculptured, indeed, but richly decorated.

"Ah, Holy Mother!" groaned this singular man, "support me in the trial to which I am appointed. Thou knowest that the glory of thy blessed Son is the sole object for which I live and move and have my being; but at times, alas! the spirit is infected with the weakness of the flesh. *Ora pro nobis*, O Mother of mercy! Verily, oftentimes my heart sinks within me when it is mine to vindicate the honour of thy holy cause against the young and the tender, the aged and the decrepit. But what are beauty and youth, gray hairs and trembling knees, in the eye of the Creator? Miserable worms are we all; nor is there anything acceptable in the Divine sight but the hearts of the faithful. Youth without faith, age without belief, purity without grace, virtue without holiness, are only more hideous by their seeming beauty, — whited sepulchres, glittering rottenness. I know this, I know it, but the human man is strong within me. Strengthen me, that I pluck it out; so that, by diligent and constant struggle with the feeble Adam, thy servant may be reduced into a mere machine to punish the godless and advance the Church."

Here sobs and tears choked the speech of the Dominican; he grovelled in the dust, he tore his hair, he howled aloud: the agony was fierce upon him. At length he drew from his robe a whip composed of several thongs studded with small

and sharp nails; and stripping his gown and the shirt of hair worn underneath, over his shoulders, applied the scourge to the naked flesh with a fury which soon covered the green-sward with the thick and clotted blood. The exhaustion which followed this terrible penance seemed to restore the senses of the stern fanatic. A smile broke over the features, that bodily pain only released from the anguished expression of mental and visionary struggles; and when he rose, and drew the hair-cloth shirt over the lacerated and quivering flesh, he said: "Now hast thou deigned to comfort and visit me, O pitying Mother; and even as by these austerities against this miserable body is the spirit relieved and soothed, so dost thou typify and betoken that men's bodies are not to be spared by those who seek to save souls and bring the nations of the earth into thy fold."

With that thought the countenance of Torquemada reassumed its wonted rigid and passionless composure; and replacing the scourge, yet clotted with blood, in his bosom, he pursued his way to the royal tent.

He found Ferdinand poring over the accounts of the vast expenses of his military preparations, which he had just received from his treasurer; and the brow of the thrifty, though ostentatious monarch, was greatly overcast by the examination.

"By the Bulls of Guisando," said the king, gravely, "I purchase the salvation of my army in this holy war at a marvellous heavy price; and if the infidels hold out much longer, we shalt have to pawn our very patrimony of Arragon."

"Son," answered the Dominican, "to purposes like thine, fear not that Providence itself will supply the worldly means. But why doubttest thou? Are not the means within thy reach? It is just that thou alone shouldst not support the wars by which Christendom is glorified. Are there not others?"

"I know what thou wouldst say, father," interrupted the king, quickly, — "thou wouldst observe that my brother monarchs should assist me with arms and treasure. Most just. But they are avaricious and envious, Tomas, and Mammon hath corrupted them."

"Nay, not to kings pointed my thought."

"Well, then," resumed the king, impatiently, "thou wouldst imply that mine own knights and nobles should yield up their coffers and mortgage their possessions. And so they ought; but they murmur already at what they have yielded to our necessities."

"And in truth," rejoined the friar, "these noble warriors should not be shorn of a splendour that well becomes the valiant champions of the Church. Nay, listen to me, son, and I may suggest a means whereby, not the friends, but enemies, of the Catholic faith shall contribute to the downfall of the Paynim. In thy dominions, especially those newly won, throughout Andalusia, in the kingdom of Cordova, are men of enormous wealth; the very caverns of the earth are sown with the impious treasure they have plundered from Christian hands, and consume in the furtherance of their iniquity. Sire, I speak of the race that crucified the Lord."

"The Jews — ay; but the excuse —"

"Is before thee. This traitor with whom thou holdest intercourse, who vowed to thee to render up Granada, and who was found the very next morning fighting with the Moors, with the blood of a Spanish martyr red upon his hands, did he not confess that his fathers were of that hateful race? Did he not bargain with thee to elevate his brethren to the rank of Christians? And has he not left with thee, upon false pretences, a harlot of his faith, who, by sorcery and the help of the Evil One, hath seduced into frantic passion the heart of the heir of the most Christian king?"

"Ha, thus does that libertine boy ever scandalize us!" said the king, bitterly.

"Well," pursued the Dominican, not heeding the interruption, "have you not here excuse enough to wring from the whole race the purchase of their existence? Note the glaring proof of this conspiracy of hell. The outcasts of the earth employed this crafty agent to contract with thee for power; and, to consummate their guilty designs, the arts that seduced Solomon are employed against thy son. The beauty of the strange woman captivates his senses, so that through the

future sovereign of Spain the counsels of Jewish craft may establish the domination of Jewish ambition. How knowest thou," he added, as he observed that Ferdinand listened to him with earnest attention, — "how knowest thou but what the next step might have been thy secret assassination, so that the victim of witchcraft, the minion of the Jewess, might reign in the stead of the mighty and unconquerable Ferdinand?"

"Go on, father," said the king, thoughtfully; "I see at least enough to justify an impost upon these servitors of Mammon."

"But though common-sense suggests to us," continued Torquemada, "that this disguised Israelite could not have acted on so vast a design without the instigation of his brethren, not only in Granada, but throughout all Andalusia, would it not be right to obtain from him his confession, and that of the maiden, within the camp, so that we may have broad and undeniable evidence whereon to act, and to still all cavil, that may come not only from the godless, but even from the too tender scruples of the righteous? Even the queen — whom the saints ever guard! — hath ever too soft a heart for these infidels, and —"

"Right," cried the king, again breaking upon Torquemada; "Isabel, the queen of Castile, must be satisfied of the justice of all our actions."

"And should it be proved that thy throne or life were endangered, and that magic was exercised to entrap her royal son into a passion for a Jewish maiden which the Church holds a crime worthy of excommunication itself, — surely, instead of counteracting, she would assist our schemes."

"Holy friend," said Ferdinand, with energy, "ever a comforter both for this world and the next, to thee and to the new powers intrusted to thee we commit this charge, — see to it at once: time presses; Granada is obstinate; the treasury waxes low."

"Son, thou hast said enough," replied the Dominican, closing his eyes and muttering a short thanksgiving. "Now then to my task."

"Yet stay," said the king, with an altered visage, "follow me to my oratory within. My heart is heavy, and I would fain seek the solace of the confessional."

The monk obeyed; and while Ferdinand, whose wonderful abilities were mingled with the weakest superstition, who persecuted from policy, yet believed, in his own heart, that he punished but from piety, confessed with penitent tears the grave offences of *aves* forgotten and beads untold, and while the Dominican admonished, rebuked, or soothed, — neither prince nor monk ever dreamed that there was an error to confess in, or a penance to be adjudged to, the cruelty that tortured a fellow-being, or the avarice that sought pretences for the extortion of a whole people.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRIBUNAL AND THE MIRACLE.

It was the dead of night, the army was hushed in sleep, when four soldiers belonging to the Holy Brotherhood, bearing with them one whose manacles proclaimed him a prisoner, passed in steady silence to a huge tent in the neighbourhood of the royal pavilion. A deep dike, formidable barricadoes, and sentries stationed at frequent intervals, testified the estimation in which the safety of this segment of the camp was held. The tent to which the soldiers approached was in extent larger than even the king's pavilion itself, — a mansion of canvas, surrounded by a wide wall of massive stones; and from its summit gloomed, in the clear and shining starlight, a small black pennant, on which was wrought a white broad-pointed cross. The soldiers halted at the gate in the wall, resigned their charge, with a whispered watchword, to two gaunt sentries; and then (relieving the sentries, who proceeded on with the prisoner) remained, mute and motionless, at the post: for stern silence and Spartan discipline were the attributes of the brotherhood of St. Hermandad.

The prisoner, as he now neared the tent, halted a moment, looked round steadily, as if to fix the spot in his remembrance, and then, with an impatient though stately gesture, followed his guards. He passed two divisions of the tent, dimly lighted, and apparently deserted. A man clad in long black robes, with a white cross on his breast, now appeared; there was an interchange of signals in dumb-show, and in another moment Almamen the Hebrew stood within a large chamber (if so that division of the tent might be called) hung with black serge. At the upper part of the space was an *estrado*, or platform, on which, by a long table, sat three men, while at the head of the board was seen the calm and rigid countenance of Tomas de Torquemada. The threshold of the tent was guarded by two men in garments similar in hue and fashion to those of the figure who had ushered Almamen into the presence of the inquisitor, each bearing a long lance, and with a long two-edged sword by his side. This made all the inhabitants of that melancholy and ominous apartment.

The Israelite looked round with a pale brow, but a flashing and scornful eye; and when he met the gaze of the Dominican, it almost seemed as if those two men, each so raised above his fellows by the sternness of his nature and the energy of his passions, sought by a look alone to assert his own supremacy and crush his foe. Yet in truth neither did justice to the other, and the indignant disdain of Almamen was retorted by the cold and icy contempt of the Dominican.

"Prisoner," said Torquemada (the first to withdraw his gaze), "a less haughty and stubborn demeanour might have better suited thy condition. But no matter; our Church is meek and humble. We have sent for thee in a charitable and paternal hope; for although as spy and traitor thy life is already forfeited, yet would we fain redeem and spare it to repentance. That hope mayst thou not forego, for the nature of all of us is weak and clings to life, — that straw of the drowning seaman."

"Priest, if such thou art," replied the Hebrew, "I have already, when first brought to this camp, explained the causes

of my detention amongst the troops of the Moor. It was my zeal for the king of Spain that brought me into that peril. Escaping from that peril, incurred in his behalf, is the king of Spain to be my accuser and my judge? If, however, my life now be sought as the grateful return for the proffer of inestimable service, I stand here to yield it. Do thy worst; and tell thy master that he loses more by my death than he can win by the lives of thirty thousand warriors."

"Cease this idle babble," said the monk-inquisitor, contemptuously, "nor think thou couldst ever deceive, with thy empty words, the mighty intellect of Ferdinand of Spain. Thou hast now to defend thyself against still graver charges than those of treachery to the king whom thou didst profess to serve. Yea, misbeliever as thou art, it is thine to vindicate thyself from blasphemy against the God thou shouldst adore. Confess the truth: thou art of the tribe and faith of Israel?"

The Hebrew frowned darkly. "Man," said he, solemnly, "is a judge of the deeds of men, but not of their opinions. I will not answer thee."

"Pause! We have means at hand that the strongest nerves and the stoutest hearts have failed to encounter. Pause, — confess!"

"Thy threat awes me not," said the Hebrew, "but I am human; and since thou wouldst know the truth, thou mayst learn it without the torture. I am of the same race as the apostles of thy Church, — I am a Jew."

"He confesses, — write down the words. Prisoner, thou hast done wisely; and we pray the Lord that, acting thus, thou mayst escape both the torture and the death. And in that faith thy daughter was reared? Answer."

"My daughter! there is no charge against her! By the God of Sinai and Horeb, you dare not touch a hair of that innocent head!"

"Answer," repeated the inquisitor, coldly.

"I do answer. She was brought up no renegade to her father's faith."

"Write down the confession. Prisoner," resumed the

Dominican, after a pause, "but few more questions remain; answer them truly, and thy life is saved. In thy conspiracy to raise thy brotherhood of Andalusia to power and influence, or, as thou didst craftily term it, to equal laws with the followers of our blessed Lord, — in thy conspiracy (by what dark arts I seek not now to know; *protege nos, beate Domine!*) to entangle in wanton affections to thy daughter the heart of the Infant of Spain, — silence, I say; be still! — in this conspiracy, thou wert aided, abetted, or instigated by certain Jews of Andalusia —"

"Hold, priest!" cried Almamen, impetuously; "thou didst name my child. Do I hear aright? Placed under the sacred charge of a king and a belted knight, has she — oh, answer me, I implore thee — been insulted by the licentious addresses of one of that king's own lineage? Answer! I am a Jew, but I am a father and a man."

"This pretended passion deceives us not," said the Dominican, who, himself cut off from the ties of life, knew nothing of their power. "Reply to the question put to thee: name thy accomplices."

"I have told thee all. Thou hast refused to answer *me*. I scorn and defy thee; my lips are closed."

The Grand Inquisitor glanced to his brethren and raised his hand. His assistants whispered each other; one of them rose, and disappeared behind the canvas at the back of the tent. Presently the hangings were withdrawn, and the prisoner beheld an interior chamber, hung with various instruments the nature of which was betrayed by their very shape; while by the rack, placed in the centre of that dreary chamber, stood a tall and grisly figure, his arms bare, his eyes bent as by an instinct on the prisoner.

Almamen gazed at these dread preparations with an unflinching aspect. The guards at the entrance of the tent approached; they struck off the fetters from his feet and hands; they led him towards the appointed place of torture.

Suddenly the Israelite paused.

"Priest," said he, in a more humble accent than he had yet assumed, "the tidings that thou didst communicate to me

respecting the sole daughter of my house and love bewildered and confused me for the moment. Suffer me but for a single moment to re-collect my senses, and I will answer without compulsion all thou mayst ask. Permit thy questions to be repeated."

The Dominican, whose cruelty to others seemed to himself sanctioned by his own insensibility to fear and contempt for bodily pain, smiled with bitter scorn at the apparent vacillation and weakness of the prisoner; but as he delighted not in torture merely for torture's sake, he motioned to the guards to release the Israelite, and replied, in a voice unnaturally mild and kindly, considering the circumstances of the scene, —

"Prisoner, could we save thee from pain, even by the anguish of our own flesh and sinews, Heaven is our judge that we would willingly undergo the torture which, with grief and sorrow, we ordained to thee. Pause, take breath, collect thyself. Three minutes shalt thou have to consider what course to adopt ere we repeat the question; but then beware how thou triflest with our indulgence."

"It suffices, I thank thee," said the Hebrew, with a touch of gratitude in his voice. As he spoke, he bent his face within his bosom, which he covered, as in profound meditation, with the folds of his long robe. Scarce half the brief time allowed him had expired, when he again lifted his countenance, and as he did so, flung back his garment. The Dominican uttered a loud cry; the guards started back in awe. A wonderful change had come over the intended victim: he seemed to stand amongst them literally wrapped in fire; flames burst from his lip and played with his long locks, as, catching the glowing hue, they curled over his shoulders like serpents of burning light; blood-red were his breast and limbs, his haughty crest, and his outstretched arm; and as for a single moment he met the shuddering eyes of his judges, he seemed, indeed, to verify all the superstitions of the time, — no longer the trembling captive, but the mighty demon or the terrible magician.

The Dominican was the first to recover his self-possession.

"Seize the enchanter!" he exclaimed; but no man stirred. Ere yet the exclamation had died on his lip, Almamen took from his breast a phial and dashed it on the ground, — it broke into a thousand shivers; a mist rose over the apartment; it spread, thickened, darkened, as a sudden night; the lamps could not pierce it. The luminous form of the Hebrew grew dull and dim, until it vanished in the shade. On every eye blindness seemed to fall. There was a dead silence, broken by a cry and a groan; and when, after some minutes, the darkness gradually dispersed, Almamen was gone. One of the guards lay bathed in blood upon the ground; they raised him: he had attempted to seize the prisoner, and had been stricken with a mortal wound. He died as he faltered forth the explanation. In the confusion and dismay of the scene, none noticed, till long afterwards, that the prisoner had paused long enough to strip the dying guard of his long mantle, — a proof that he feared his more secret arts might not suffice to bear him safe through the camp without the aid of worldly stratagem.

"The fiend hath been amongst us," said the Dominican, solemnly falling on his knees; "let us pray!"

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

ISABEL AND THE JEWISH MAIDEN.

WHILE this scene took place before the tribunal of Torquemada, Leila had been summoned from the indulgence of fears, which her gentle nature and her luxurious nurturing had ill fitted her to contend against, to the presence of the queen. That gifted and high-spirited princess, whose virtues were her own, whose faults were of her age, was not, it is true, without the superstition and something of the intolerant spirit of her royal spouse; but even where her faith assented to persecution, her heart ever inclined to mercy, and it was her voice alone that ever counteracted the fiery zeal of Torquemada, and mitigated the sufferings of the unhappy ones who fell under the suspicion of heresy. She had, happily, too, within her a strong sense of justice, as well as the sentiment of compassion; and often, when she could not save the accused, she prevented the consequences of his imputed crime falling upon the innocent members of his house or tribe.

In the interval between his conversation with Ferdinand and the examination of Almamen, the Dominican had sought the queen, and had placed before her in glowing colours, not only the treason of Almamen, but the consequences of the impious passion her son had conceived for Leila. In that day, any connection between a Christian knight and a Jewess was deemed a sin scarce expiable; and Isabel conceived all that horror of her son's offence which was natural in a pious mother and a haughty queen. But despite all the arguments of the friar, she could not be prevailed upon to render up

Leila to the tribunal of the Inquisition; and that dread court, but newly established, did not dare, without her consent, to seize upon one under the immediate protection of the queen.

"Fear not, father," said Isabel, with quiet firmness, "I will take upon myself to examine the maiden; and at least I will see her removed from all chance of tempting or being tempted by this graceless boy. But she was placed under the charge of the king and myself as a hostage and a trust; we accepted the charge, and our royal honour is pledged to the safety of the maiden. Heaven forbid that I should deny the existence of sorcery, assured as we are of its emanation from the Evil One; but I fear, in this fancy of Juan's, that the maiden is more sinned against than sinning. And yet my son is doubtless not aware of the unhappy faith of the Jewess, the knowledge of which alone will suffice to cure him of his error. You shake your head, father; but, I repeat, I will act in this affair so as to merit the confidence I demand. Go, good Tomas. We have not reigned so long without belief in our power to control and deal with a simple maiden."

The queen extended her hand to the monk with a smile so sweet in its dignity that it softened even that rugged heart; and with a reluctant sigh and a murmured prayer that her counsels might be guided for the best, Torquemada left the royal presence.

"The poor child!" thought Isabel; "those tender limbs and that fragile form are ill fitted for yon monk's stern tutelage. She seems gentle, and her face has in it all the yielding softness of our sex. Doubtless by mild means she may be persuaded to abjure her wretched creed; and the shade of some holy convent may hide her alike from the licentious gaze of my son and the iron zeal of the Inquisitor. I will see her."

When Leila entered the queen's pavilion, Isabel, who was alone, marked her trembling step with a compassionate eye; and as Leila, in obedience to the queen's request, threw up her veil, the paleness of her cheek and the traces of recent tears appealed to Isabel's heart with more success than had attended all the pious invectives of Torquemada.

"Maiden," said Isabel, encouragingly, "I fear thou hast been strangely harassed by the thoughtless caprice of the young prince. Think of it no more. But if thou art what I have ventured to believe and to assert thee to be, cheerfully subscribe to the means I will suggest for preventing the continuance of addresses which cannot but injure thy fair name."

"Ah, madam!" said Leila, as she fell on one knee beside the queen, "most joyfully, most gratefully, will I accept any asylum which proffers solitude and peace."

"The asylum to which I would fain lead thy steps," answered Isabel, gently, "is indeed one whose solitude is holy, whose peace is that of Heaven. But of this hereafter. Thou wilt not hesitate, then, to quit the camp, unknown to the prince, and ere he can again seek thee?"

"Hesitate, madam? Ah! rather, how shall I express my thanks?"

"I did not read that face misjudgingly," thought the queen as she resumed. "Be it so; we will not lose another night. Withdraw yonder, through the inner tent; the litter shall be straight prepared for thee, and ere midnight thou shalt sleep in safety under the roof of one of the bravest knights and noblest ladies that our realm can boast. Thou shalt bear with thee a letter that shall commend thee specially to the care of thy hostess; thou wilt find her of a kindly and fostering nature. And oh, maiden!" added the queen, with benevolent warmth, "steel not thy heart against her, listen with ductile senses to her gentle ministry. And may God and His Son prosper that pious lady's counsel, so that it may win a new straying to the Immortal Fold!"

Leila listened and wondered, but made no answer, until, as she gained the entrance to the interior division of the tent, she stopped abruptly, and said, —

"Pardon me, gracious queen, but dare I ask thee one question? It is not of myself."

"Speak, and fear not."

"My father, hath aught been heard of him? He promised that ere the fifth day were past he would once more see his

child; and alas! that date is past, and I am still alone in the dwelling of the stranger."

"Unhappy child," muttered Isabel to herself, "thou knowest not his treason nor his fate. Yet why shouldst thou? Ignorant of what would render thee blest hereafter, continue ignorant of what would afflict thee here. Be cheered, maiden," answered the queen, aloud. "No doubt there are reasons sufficient to forbid your meeting. But thou shalt not lack friends in the dwelling-house of the stranger."

"Ah, noble queen, pardon me, and one word more. There hath been with me, more than once, a stern old man, whose voice freezes the blood within my veins; he questions me of my father, and in the tone of a foe who would entrap from the child something to the peril of the sire. That man, — thou knowest him, gracious queen, — he cannot have the power to harm my father?"

"Peace, maiden! The man thou speakest of is the priest of God, and the innocent have nothing to dread from his reverend zeal. For thyself, I say again, be cheered; in the home to which I consign thee thou wilt see him no more. Take comfort, poor child; weep not. All have their cares; our duty is to bear in this life, reserving hope only for the next."

The queen, destined herself to those domestic afflictions which pomp cannot soothe, nor power allay, spoke with a prophetic sadness which yet more touched a heart that her kindness of look and tone had already softened; and in the impulse of a nature never tutored in the rigid ceremonials of that stately court, Leila suddenly came forward, and falling on one knee, seized the hand of her protectress and kissed it warmly through her tears.

"Are you, too, unhappy?" she said. "I will pray for you to *my* God!"

The queen, surprised and moved at an action which, had witnesses been present, would only perhaps (for such is human nature) have offended her Castilian prejudices, left her hand in Leila's grateful clasp; and laying the other upon the parted and luxuriant ringlets of the kneeling maiden, said

gently: "And thy prayers shall avail thee and me when thy God and mine are the same. Bless thee, maiden! I am a mother; thou art motherless, — bless thee!"

CHAPTER II.

THE TEMPTATION OF THE JEWESS. — IN WHICH THE HISTORY
PASSES FROM THE OUTWARD TO THE INTERNAL.

It was about the very hour, almost the very moment, in which Almamen effected his mysterious escape from the tent of the Inquisition that the train accompanying the litter which bore Leila, and which was composed of some chosen soldiers of Isabel's own body-guard, after traversing the camp, winding along that part of the mountainous defile which was in the possession of the Spaniards, and ascending a high and steep acclivity, halted before the gates of a strongly fortified castle, renowned in the chronicles of that memorable war. The hoarse challenge of the sentry, the grating of jealous bars, the clanks of hoofs upon the rough pavement of the courts, and the streaming glare of torches, — falling upon stern and bearded visages, and imparting a ruddier glow to the moonlit buttresses and battlements of the fortress, — aroused Leila from a kind of torpor rather than sleep, in which the fatigue and excitement of the day had steeped her senses. An old seneschal conducted her through vast and gloomy halls (how unlike the brilliant chambers and fantastic arcades of her Moorish home!) to a huge Gothic apartment, hung with the arras of Flemish looms. In a few moments maidens, hastily aroused from slumber, grouped around her with a respect which would certainly not have been accorded had her birth and creed been known. They gazed with surprise at her extraordinary beauty and foreign garb, and evidently considered the new guest a welcome addition to the scanty society of the castle. Under any other circumstances,

the strangeness of all she saw, and the frowning gloom of the chamber to which she was consigned, would have damped the spirits of one whose destiny had so suddenly passed from the deepest quiet into the sternest excitement. But any change was a relief to the roar of the camp, the addresses of the prince, and the ominous voice and countenance of Torquemada; and Leila looked around her with the feeling that the queen's promise was fulfilled, and that she was already amidst the blessings of shelter and repose: It was long, however, before sleep revisited her eyelids, and when she woke, the noonday sun streamed broadly through the lattice. By the bedside sat a matron advanced in years, but of a mild and prepossessing countenance, which only borrowed a yet more attractive charm from an expression of placid and habitual melancholy. She was robed in black; but the rich pearls that were interwoven in the sleeves and stomacher, the jewelled cross that was appended from a chain of massive gold, and, still more, a certain air of dignity and command, bespoke, even to the inexperienced eye of Leila, the evidence of superior station.

"Thou hast slept late, daughter," said the lady, with a benevolent smile; "may thy slumbers have refreshed thee! Accept my regrets that I knew not till this morning of thine arrival, or I should have been the first to welcome the charge of my royal mistress."

There was in the look, much more than in the words of the Donna Inez de Quexada, a soothing and tender interest that was as balm to the heart of Leila; in truth, she had been made the guest of perhaps the only lady in Spain, of pure and Christian blood, who did not despise or execrate the name of Leila's tribe. Donna Inez had herself contracted to a Jew a debt of gratitude which she had sought to return to the whole race. Many years before the time in which our tale is cast, her husband and herself had been sojourning at Naples, then closely connected with the politics of Spain, upon an important State mission. They had then an only son, a youth of a wild and desultory character, whom the spirit of adventure allured to the East. In one of those sultry lands the young

Quexada was saved from the hands of robbers by the caravan-serai of a wealthy traveller. With this stranger he contracted that intimacy which wandering and romantic men often conceive for each other, without any other sympathy than that of the same pursuits. Subsequently, he discovered that his companion was of the Jewish faith, and with the usual prejudice of his birth and time, recoiled from the friendship he had solicited, and shrank from the sense of the obligation he had incurred: he quitted his companion. Wearied, at length, with travel, he was journeying homeward when he was seized with a sudden and virulent fever, mistaken for plague; all fled from the contagion of the supposed pestilence, — he was left to die. One man discovered his condition, — watched, tended, and, skilled in the deeper secrets of the healing art, restored him to life and health: it was the same Jew who had preserved him from the robbers. At this second and more inestimable obligation the prejudices of the Spaniard vanished; he formed a deep and grateful attachment for his preserver. They lived together for some time, and the Israelite finally accompanied the young Quexada to Naples. Inez retained a lively sense of the service rendered to her only son, and the impression had been increased, not only by the appearance of the Israelite, which, dignified and stately, bore no likeness to the cringing servility of his brethren, but also by the singular beauty and gentle deportment of his then newly wed bride, whom he had wooed and won in that holy land sacred equally to the faith of Christian and of Jew. The young Quexada did not long survive his return; his constitution was broken by long travel and the debility that followed his fierce disease. On his deathbed he had besought the mother whom he left childless, and whose Catholic prejudices were less stubborn than those of his sire, never to forget the services a Jew had conferred upon him, to make the sole recompense in her power, — the sole recompense the Jew himself had demanded, — and to lose no occasion to soothe or mitigate the miseries to which the bigotry of the time often exposed the oppressed race of his deliverer. Donna Inez had faithfully kept the promise she gave to the last scion of her

house, and through the power and reputation of her husband and her own connections, and still more through an early friendship with the queen, she had, on her return to Spain, been enabled to ward off many a persecution, and many a charge on false pretences, to which the wealth of some son of Israel made the cause, while his faith made the pretext. Yet, with all the natural feelings of a rigid Catholic, she had earnestly sought to render the favour she had thus obtained amongst the Jews minister to her pious zeal for their more than temporal welfare. She had endeavoured by gentle means to make the conversions which force was impotent to effect; and in some instances her success had been signal. The good señora had thus obtained high renown for sanctity; and Isabel thought rightly that she could not select a protectress for Leila who would more kindly shelter her youth, or more strenuously labour for her salvation. It was, indeed, a dangerous situation for the adherence of the maiden to that faith which it had cost her fiery father so many sacrifices to preserve and to advance.

It was by little and little that Donna Inez sought rather to undermine than to storm the mental fortress she hoped to man with spiritual allies; and in her frequent conversations with Leila she was at once perplexed and astonished by the simple and sublime nature of the belief upon which she waged war. For whether it was that, in his desire to preserve Leila as much as possible from contact even with Jews themselves, whose general character (vitiating by the oppression which engendered meanness, and the extortion which fostered avarice) Almamen regarded with lofty though concealed repugnance, or whether it was that his philosophy did not interpret the Jewish formula of belief in the same spirit as the herd, — the religion inculcated in the breast of Leila was different from that which Inez had ever before encountered amongst her proselytes. It was less mundane and material, — a kind of passionate rather than metaphysical theism, which invested the great ONE, indeed, with many human sympathies and attributes, but still left Him the august and awful God of the Genesis, the Father of a Universe, though the individual

Protector of a fallen sect. Her attention had been less directed to whatever appears, to a superficial gaze, stern and inexorable in the character of the Hebrew God, and which the religion of Christ so beautifully softened and so majestically refined, than to those passages in which His love watched over a chosen people, and His forbearance bore with their transgressions. Her reason had been worked upon to its belief by that mysterious and solemn agency by which — when the whole world beside was bowed to the worship of innumerable deities and the adoration of graven images — in a small and secluded portion of earth, amongst a people far less civilized and philosophical than many by which they were surrounded, had been alone preserved a pure and sublime theism, disdaining a likeness in the things of heaven or earth. Leila knew little of the more narrow and exclusive tenets of her brethren; a Jewess in name, she was rather a deist in belief, — a deist of such a creed as Athenian schools might have taught to the imaginative pupils of Plato, save only that too dark a shadow had been cast over the hopes of another world. Without the absolute denial of the Sadducee, Almamen had probably much of the quiet scepticism which belonged to many sects of the early Jews, and which still clings round the wisdom of the wisest who reject the doctrine of Revelation; and while he had not sought to eradicate from the breast of his daughter any of the vague desire which points to a Hereafter, he had never, at least, directed her thoughts or aspirations to that solemn future. Nor in the sacred book which was given to her survey, and which so rigidly upheld the unity of the Supreme Power, was there that positive and unequivocal assurance of life beyond “the grave where all things are forgotten” that might supply the deficiencies of her mortal instructor. Perhaps, sharing those notions of the different value of the sexes, prevalent, from the remotest period, in his beloved and ancestral East, Almamen might have hopes for himself which did not extend to his child. And thus she grew up, with all the beautiful faculties of the soul cherished and unfolded, without thought, without more than dim and shadowy conjectures, of the Eternal

Bourn to which the sorrowing pilgrim of the earth is bound. It was on this point that the quick eye of Donna Inez discovered her faith was vulnerable: who would not, if belief were voluntary, believe in the world to come? Leila's curiosity and interest were aroused; she willingly listened to her new guide, she willingly inclined to conclusions pressed upon her, not with menace, but persuasion. Free from the stubborn associations, the sectarian prejudices, and unversed in the peculiar traditions and accounts of the learned of her race, she found nothing to shock her in the volume which seemed but a continuation of the elder writings of her faith. The sufferings of the Messiah, His sublime purity, His meek forgiveness, spoke to her woman's heart; His doctrines elevated, while they charmed, her reason; and in the heaven that a Divine hand opened to all, — the humble as the proud, the oppressed as the oppressor, to the woman as to the lords of the earth, — she found a haven for all the doubts she had known, and for the despair which of late had darkened the face of earth. Her home lost, the deep and beautiful love of her youth blighted, — that was a creed almost irresistible which told her that grief was but for a day, that happiness was eternal. Far, too, from revolting such of the Hebrew pride of association as she had formed, the birth of the Messiah in the land of the Israelites seemed to consummate their peculiar triumph as the Elected of Jehovah. And while she mourned for the Jews who persecuted the Saviour, she gloried in those whose belief had carried the name and worship of the descendants of David over the farthest regions of the world. Often she perplexed and startled the worthy Inez by exclaiming, "This your belief is the same as mine, adding only the assurance of immortal life: Christianity is but the Revelation of Judaism."

The wise and gentle instrument of Leila's conversion did not, however, give vent to those more Catholic sentiments which might have scared away the wings of the descending dove. She forbore too vehemently to point out the distinctions of the several creeds, and rather suffered them to melt insensibly one into the other: Leila was a Christian while

she still believed herself a Jewess. But in the fond and lovely weakness of mortal emotions, there was one bitter thought that often and often came to mar the peace that otherwise would have settled on her soul. That father, the sole softener of whose stern heart and mysterious fate she was, with what pangs would he receive the news of her conversion! And Muza, that bright and hero-vision of her youth, — was she not setting the last seal of separation upon all hope of union with the idol of the Moors? But alas! was she not already separated from him, and had not their faiths been from the first at variance? From these thoughts she started with sighs and tears; and before her stood the crucifix already admitted into her chamber, and — not, perhaps, too wisely — banished so rigidly from the oratories of the Huguenot. For the representation of that Divine resignation, that mortal agony, that miraculous sacrifice, what eloquence it hath for our sorrows! What preaching hath the symbol to the vanities of our wishes, to the yearnings of our discontent!

By degrees, as her new faith grew confirmed, Leila now inclined herself earnestly to those pictures of the sanctity and calm of the conventual life which Inez delighted to draw. In the reaction of her thoughts, and her despondency of all worldly happiness, there seemed to the young maiden an inexpressible charm in a solitude which was to release her forever from human love, and render her entirely up to sacred visions and imperishable hopes. And with this selfish, there mingled a generous and sublime sentiment. The prayers of a convent might be heard in favour of those yet benighted, and the awful curse upon her outcast race be lightened by the orisons of one humble heart. In all ages, in all creeds, a strange and mystic impression has existed of the efficacy of self-sacrifice in working the redemption even of a whole people; this belief, so strong in the old Orient and classic religions, was yet more confirmed by Christianity, — a creed founded upon the grandest of historic sacrifices, and the lofty doctrine of which, rightly understood, perpetuates in the heart of every believer the duty of self-immolation, as well as faith in the power of prayer, no matter how great the object, how mean the sup-

plicator. On these thoughts Leila meditated till thoughts acquired the intensity of passions, and the conversion of the Jewess was completed.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

It was on the third morning after the king of Granada, reconciled to his people, had reviewed his gallant army in the Vivarrambla, and Boabdil, surrounded by his chiefs and nobles, was planning a deliberate and decisive battle, by assault on the Christian camp, when a scout suddenly arrived, breathless, at the gates of the palace, to communicate the unlooked-for and welcome intelligence that Ferdinand had in the night broken up his camp and marched across the mountains towards Cordova. In fact, the outbreak of formidable conspiracies had suddenly rendered the appearance of Ferdinand necessary elsewhere; and his intrigues with Almamen frustrated, he despaired of a very speedy conquest of the city. The Spanish king resolved, therefore, after completing the devastation of the Vega, to defer the formal and prolonged siege, which could alone place Granada within his power, until his attention was no longer distracted by other foes, and until, it must be added, he had replenished an exhausted treasury. He had formed, with Torquemada, a vast and wide scheme of persecution, not only against Jews, but against Christians whose fathers had been of that race, and who were suspected of relapsing into Judaical practices. The two schemers of this grand design were actuated by different motives: the one wished to exterminate the crime, the other to sell forgiveness for it. And Torquemada connived at the griping avarice of the king because it served to give to himself and to the infant Inquisition a power and authority which the Dominican foresaw would be soon greater even than those of royalty itself,

and which, he imagined, by scourging earth, would redound to the interests of heaven.

The strange disappearance of Almamen, which was distorted and exaggerated by the credulity of the Spaniards into an event of the most terrific character, served to complete the chain of evidence against the wealthy Jews and Jew-descended Spaniards of Andalusia; and while, in imagination, the king already clutched the gold of their redemption here, the Dominican kindled the flame that was to light them to punishment hereafter.

Boabdil and his chiefs received the intelligence of the Spanish retreat with a doubt which soon yielded to the most triumphant delight. Boabdil at once resumed all the energy for which, though but by fits and starts, his earlier youth had been remarkable.

"Allah Achbar! God is great!" cried he; "we will not remain here till it suit the foe to confine the eagle again to his eyry. They have left us, — we will burst on them. Summon our *alfaquis*; we will proclaim a holy war! The sovereign of the last possessions of the Moors is in the field. Not a town that contains a Moslem but shall receive our summons, and we will gather round our standard all the children of our faith!"

"May the king live forever!" cried the council, with one voice.

"Lose not a moment," resumed Boabdil; "on to the Vivar-rambla, marshal the troops, — Muza heads the cavalry, myself our foot. Ere the sun's shadow reach yonder forest, our army shall be on its march."

The warriors, hastily and in joy, left the palace; and when he was alone, Boabdil again relapsed into his wonted irresolution. After striding to and fro for some minutes in anxious thought, he abruptly quitted the hall of council, and passed into the more private chambers of the palace, till he came to a door strongly guarded by plates of iron. It yielded easily, however, to a small key which he carried in his girdle, and Boabdil stood in a small circular room, apparently without other door or outlet; but after looking cautiously round, the

king touched a secret spring in the wall, which, giving way, discovered a niche, in which stood a small lamp burning with the purest naphtha, and a scroll of yellow parchment covered with strange letters and hieroglyphics. He thrust the scroll in his bosom, took the lamp in his hand, and pressing another spring within the niche, the wall receded, and showed a narrow and winding staircase. The king reclosed the entrance and descended; the stairs led at last into damp and rough passages, and the murmur of waters, that reached his ear through the thick walls, indicated the subterranean nature of the soil through which they were hewn. The lamp burned clear and steady through the darkness of the place, and Boabdil proceeded with such impatient rapidity that the distance (in reality considerable) which he traversed before he arrived at his destined bourn was quickly measured. He came at last into a wide cavern, guarded by doors concealed and secret as those which had screened the entrance from the upper air. He was in one of the many vaults which made the mighty cemetery of the monarchs of Granada; and before him stood the robed and crowned skeleton, and before him glowed the magic dial-plate of which he had spoken in his interview with Muza.

"O dread and awful image!" cried the king, throwing himself on his knees before the skeleton, — "shadow of what was once a king wise in council and terrible in war, if in those hollow bones yet lurks the impalpable and unseen spirit, hear thy repentant son. Forgive, while it is yet time, the rebellion of his fiery youth, and suffer thy daring soul to animate the doubt and weakness of his own. I go forth to battle, waiting not the signal thou didst ordain. Let not the penance for a rashness to which fate urges me on attach to my country, but to me. And if I perish in the field, may my evil destinies be buried with me, and a worthier monarch redeem my errors and preserve Granada!"

As the king raised his looks, the relaxed grin of the grim dead, made yet more hideous by the mockery of the diadem and the royal robe, froze back to ice the passion and sorrow at his heart. He shuddered, and rose with a deep

sigh; when, as his eyes mechanically followed the lifted arm of the skeleton, he beheld, with mingled delight and awe, the hitherto motionless finger of the dial-plate pass slowly on, and rest at the word so long and so impatiently desired. "ARM!" cried the king; "do I read aright,—are my prayers heard?" A low and deep sound, like that of subterranean thunder, boomed through the chamber; and in the same instant the wall opened, and the king beheld the long-expected figure of Almamen the magician. But no longer was that stately form clad in the loose and peaceful garb of the Eastern santon. Complete armour cased his broad chest and sinewy limbs; his head alone was bare, and his prominent and impressive features were lighted, not with mystical enthusiasm, but with warlike energy. In his right hand he carried a drawn sword; his left supported the staff of a snow-white and dazzling banner.

So sudden was the apparition, and so excited the mind of the king, that the sight of a supernatural being could scarcely have impressed him with more amaze and awe.

"King of Granada," said Almamen, "the hour hath come at last; go forth and conquer! With the Christian monarch there is no hope of peace or compact. At thy request I sought him, but my spells alone preserved the life of thy herald. Rejoice! for thine evil destinies have rolled away from thy spirit, like a cloud from the glory of the sun. The genii of the East have woven this banner from the rays of benignant stars. It shall beam before thee in the front of battle,—it shall rise over the rivers of Christian blood. As the moon sways the bosom of the tides, it shall sway and direct the surges and the course of war!"

"Man of mystery, thou hast given me a new life!"

"And, fighting by thy side," resumed Almamen, "I will assist to carve out for thee, from the ruins of Arragon and Castile, the grandeur of a new throne. Arm, monarch of Granada, arm! I hear the neigh of thy charger in the midst of the mailed thousands. Arm!"

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

LEILA IN THE CASTLE. — THE SIEGE.

THE calmer contemplations and more holy anxieties of Leila were at length broken in upon by intelligence, the fearful interest of which absorbed the whole mind and care of every inhabitant of the castle. Boabdil el Chico had taken the field, at the head of a numerous army. Rapidly scouring the country, he had descended, one after one, upon the principal fortresses, which Ferdinand had left, strongly garrisoned, in the immediate neighbourhood. His success was as immediate as it was signal; the terror of his arms began once more to spread far and wide; every day swelled his ranks with new recruits; and from the snow-clad summits of the Sierra Nevada poured down, in wild hordes, the fierce mountain race, who, accustomed to eternal winter, made a strange contrast, in their rugged appearance and shaggy clothing, to the glittering and civilized soldiery of Granada.

Moorish towns, which had submitted to Ferdinand, broke from their allegiance, and sent their ardent youth and experienced veterans to the standard of the Keys and Crescent. To add to the sudden panic of the Spaniards, it went forth that a formidable magician, who seemed inspired rather with the fury of a demon than the valour of a man, had made an abrupt appearance in the ranks of the Moslems. Wherever the Moors shrank back from wall or tower, down which poured the boiling pitch, or rolled the deadly artillery of the besieged, this sorcerer—rushing into the midst of the flagging force, and waving, with wild gestures, a white banner, supposed by both Moor and Christian to be the work of magic and preternatural spells—dared every danger and escaped

every weapon; with voice, with prayer, with example, he fired the Moors to an enthusiasm that revived the first days of Mohammedan conquest; and tower after tower, along the mighty range of the mountain-chain of fortresses, was polluted by the wave and glitter of the ever-victorious banner. The veteran Mendo de Quexada, who with a garrison of two hundred and fifty men held the castle of Alhendin, was, however, undaunted by the unprecedented successes of Boabdil. Aware of the approaching storm, he spent the days of peace yet accorded to him in making every preparation for the siege that he foresaw: messengers were despatched to Ferdinand; new outworks were added to the castle; ample store of provisions was laid in; and no precaution omitted that could still preserve to the Spaniards a fortress that, from its vicinity to Granada, its command of the Vega and the valleys of the Alpuxarras, was the bitterest thorn in the side of the Moorish power.

It was early one morning that Leila stood by the lattice of her lofty chamber, gazing, with many and mingled emotions, on the distant domes of Granada as they slept in the silent sunshine. Her heart for the moment was busy with the thoughts of home, and the chances and peril of the time were forgotten.

The sound of martial music afar off broke upon her reveries; she started, and listened breathlessly: it became more distinct and clear. The clash of the zell, the boom of the African drum, and the wild and barbarous blast of the Moorish clarion were now each distinguishable from the other; and at length, as she gazed and listened, winding along the steepes of the mountain were seen the gleaming spears and pennants of the Moslem vanguard. Another moment, and the whole castle was astir.

Mendo de Quexada, hastily arming, repaired, himself, to the battlements, and from her lattice Leila beheld him, from time to time, stationing to the best advantage his scanty troops. In a few minutes she was joined by Donna Inez and the women of the castle, who fearfully clustered round their mistress, — not the less disposed, however, to gratify the

passion of the sex by a glimpse through the lattice at the gorgeous array of the Moorish army.

The casements of Leila's chamber were peculiarly adapted to command a safe nor insufficient view of the progress of the enemy; and with a beating heart and flushing cheek the Jewish maiden, deaf to the voices around her, imagined she could already descry amidst the horsemen the lion port and snowy garments of Muza Ben Abil Gazan.

What a situation was hers! Already a Christian, could she hope for the success of the infidel? Ever a woman, could she hope for the defeat of her lover? But the time for meditation on her destiny was but brief; the detachment of the Moorish cavalry was now just without the walls of the little town that girded the castle, and the loud clarion of the heralds summoned the garrison to surrender.

"Not while one stone stands upon another!" was the short answer of Quexada; and in ten minutes afterwards the sullen roar of the artillery broke from wall and tower over the vales below.

It was then that the women, from Leila's lattice, beheld, slowly marshalling themselves in order, the whole power and pageantry of the besieging army. Thick, serried, — line after line, column upon column, — they spread below the frowning steep. The sunbeams lighted up that goodly array as it swayed and murmured and advanced, like the billows of a glittering sea. The royal standard was soon descried waving above the pavilion of Boabdil; and the king himself, mounted on his cream-coloured charger, which was covered with trappings of cloth-of-gold, was recognized amongst the infantry, whose task it was to lead the assault.

"Pray with us, my daughter!" cried Inez, falling on her knees. Alas! what could Leila pray for?

Four days and four nights passed away in that memorable siege; for the moon, then at her full, allowed no respite even in night itself. Their numbers and their vicinity to Granada gave the besiegers the advantage of constant relays, and troop succeeded to troop, so that the weary had ever successors in the vigour of new assailants.

On the fifth day all of the fortress, save the keep (an immense tower), was in the hands of the Moslems; and in this last hold, the worn-out and scanty remnant of the garrison mustered, in the last hope of a brave despair.

Quexada appeared, covered with gore and dust, — his eyes bloodshot, his cheek haggard and hollow, his locks blanched with sudden age, — in the hall of the tower where the women, half dead with terror, were assembled.

"Food!" cried he, — "food and wine! It may be our last banquet."

His wife threw her arms round him. "Not yet," he cried, "not yet; we will have one embrace before we part."

"Is there, then, no hope?" said Inez, with a pale cheek, yet steady eye.

"None, unless to-morrow's dawn gild the spears of Ferdinand's army upon yonder hills. Till morn we may hold out." As he spoke, he hastily devoured some morsels of food, drained a huge goblet of wine, and abruptly quitted the chamber.

At that moment the women distinctly heard the loud shouts of the Moors; and Leila, approaching the grated casement, could perceive the approach of what seemed to her like moving walls.

Covered by ingenious constructions of wood and thick hides, the besiegers advanced to the foot of the tower in comparative shelter from the burning streams which still poured, fast and seething, from the battlements; while in the rear came showers of darts and cross-bolts from the more distant Moors, protecting the work of the engineer, and piercing through almost every loophole and crevice in the fortress.

Meanwhile the stalwart governor beheld with dismay and despair the preparations of the engineers, whom the wooden screen-works protected from every weapon.

"By the Holy Sepulchre," cried he, gnashing his teeth, "they are mining the tower, and we shall be buried in its ruins! Look out, Gonsalvo; see you not a gleam of spears yonder, over the mountain? Mine eyes are dim with watching."

"Alas! brave Mendo, it is only the sloping sun upon the snows; but there is hope yet."

The soldier's words terminated in a shrill and sudden cry of agony; and he fell dead by the side of Quexada, the brain crushed by a bolt from a Moorish arquebus.

"My best warrior!" said Quexada; "peace be with him! Ho, there! See you yon desperate infidel urging on the miners? By the heavens above, it is he of the white banner; it is the sorcerer! Fire on him! he is without the shelter of the woodworks."

Twenty shafts, from wearied and nerveless arms, fell innocuous round the form of Almamen; and as, waving aloft his ominous banner, he disappeared again behind the screen-works, the Spaniards almost fancied they could hear his exulting and demon laugh.

The sixth day came, and the work of the enemy was completed. The tower was entirely undermined; the foundations rested only upon wooden props, which, with a humanity that was characteristic of Boabdil, had been placed there, in order that the besieged might escape ere the final crash of their last hold.

It was now noon; the whole Moorish force, quitting the plain, occupied the steep that spread below the tower, in multitudinous array and breathless expectation. The miners stood aloof; the Spaniards lay prostrate and exhausted upon the battlements, like mariners who, after every effort against the storm, await, resigned and almost indifferent, the sweep of the fatal surge.

Suddenly the lines of the Moors gave way, and Boabdil himself, with Muza at his right hand, and Almamen on his left, advanced towards the foot of the tower. At the same time the Ethiopian guards, each bearing a torch, marched slowly in the rear, and from the midst of them paced the royal herald and sounded the last warning. The hush of the immense armament; the glare of the torches, lighting the ebon faces and giant forms of their bearers; the majestic appearance of the king himself; the heroic aspect of Muza; the bare head and glittering banner of Almamen, — all combined with the circumstances of the time to invest the spectacle with something singularly awful, and perhaps sublime.

Quexada turned his eyes mutely round the ghastly faces of his warriors, and still made not the signal. His lips muttered, his eyes glared, when suddenly he heard below the wail of women; and the thought of Inez, the bride of his youth, the partner of his age, came upon him, and with a trembling hand he lowered the yet unquailing standard of Spain. Then the silence below broke into a mighty shout, which shook the grim tower to its unsteady and temporary base.

"Arise, my friends," he said, with a bitter sigh; "we have fought like men, and our country will not blush for us."

He descended the winding stairs; his soldiers followed him with faltering steps; the gates of the keep unfolded; and these gallant Christians surrendered themselves to the Moor.

"Do with *us* as you will," said Quexada, as he laid the keys at the hoofs of Boabdil's barb; "but there are women in the garrison, who —"

"Are sacred," interrupted the king. "At once we accord their liberty, and free transport whithersoever ye would desire. Speak, then: to what place of safety shall they be conducted?"

"Generous king!" replied the veteran Quexada, brushing away his tears with the back of his hand, "you take the sting from our shame. We accept your offer in the same spirit in which it is made. Across the mountains, on the verge of the plain of Olfadez, I possess a small castle, ungarrisoned and unfortified. Thence, should the war take that direction, the women can readily obtain safe-conduct to the queen at Cordova."

"Be it so," returned Boabdil. Then, with Oriental delicacy, selecting the eldest of the officers round him, he gave him instructions to enter the castle, and with a strong guard provide for the safety of the women, according to the directions of Quexada. To another of his officers he confided the Spanish prisoners, and gave the signal to his army to withdraw from the spot, leaving only a small body to complete the ruin of the fortress.

Accompanied by Almamen and his principal officers, Boabdil now hastened towards Granada; and while, with slower prog-

ress, Quexada and his companions, under a strong escort, took their way across the Vega, a sudden turn in their course brought abruptly before them the tower they had so valiantly defended. There it still stood, proud and stern, amidst the blackened and broken wrecks around it, shooting aloft, dark and grim, against the sky. Another moment, and a mighty crash sounded on their ears, while the tower fell to the earth amidst volumes of wreathing smoke and showers of dust, which were borne by the concussion to the spot on which they took their last gaze of the proudest fortress on which the Moors of Granada had beheld, from their own walls, the standard of Arragon and Castile.

At the same time Leila, — thus brought so strangely within the very reach of her father and her lover, and yet by a mysterious fate still divided from both, — with Donna Inez and the rest of the females of the garrison, pursued her melancholy path along the ridges of the mountains.

CHAPTER II.

ALMAMEN'S PROPOSED ENTERPRISE. — THE THREE ISRAELITES.
— CIRCUMSTANCE IMPRESSES EACH CHARACTER WITH A
VARYING DIE.

BOABDIL followed up his late success with a series of brilliant assaults on the neighbouring fortresses. Granada, like a strong man bowed to the ground, wrenched, one after one, the bands that had crippled her liberty and strength; and at length, after regaining a considerable portion of the surrounding territory, the king resolved to lay siege to the sea-port of Salobreña. Could he obtain this town, Boabdil, by establishing communication between the sea and Granada, would both be enabled to avail himself of the assistance of his African allies, and also prevent the Spaniards from cut-

ting off supplies to the city, should they again besiege it. Thither, then, accompanied by Muza, the Moorish king bore his victorious standard.

On the eve of his departure Almamen sought the king's presence. A great change had come over the santón since the departure of Ferdinand, — his wonted stateliness of mien was gone; his eyes were sunk and hollow; his manner, disturbed and absent. In fact, his love for his daughter made the sole softness of his character; and that daughter was in the hands of the king who had sentenced the father to the tortures of the Inquisition! To what dangers might she not be subjected by the intolerant zeal of conversion! And could that frame and gentle heart brave the terrific engines that might be brought against her fears? "Better," thought he, "that she should perish, even by the torture, than adopt that hated faith." He gnashed his teeth in agony at either alternative. His dreams, his objects, his revenge, his ambition, — all forsook him; one single hope, one thought, completely mastered his stormy passions and fitful intellect.

In this mood the pretended santón met Boabdil. He represented to the king, over whom his influence had prodigiously increased since the late victories of the Moors, the necessity of employing the armies of Ferdinand at a distance. He proposed, in furtherance of this policy, to venture himself in Cordova, to endeavour secretly to stir up those Moors in that, their ancient kingdom, who had succumbed to the Spanish yoke, and whose hopes might naturally be inflamed by the recent successes of Boabdil, and at least to foment such disturbances as might afford the king sufficient time to complete his designs and recruit his force by aid of the powers with which he was in league.

The representations of Almamen at length conquered Boabdil's reluctance to part with his sacred guide, and it was finally arranged that the Israelite should at once depart from the city.

As Almamen pursued homeward his solitary way, he found himself suddenly accosted in the Hebrew tongue. He turned hastily, and saw before him an old man in the Jewish gown.

He recognized Elias, one of the wealthiest and most eminent of the race of Israel.

"Pardon me, wise countryman," said the Jew, bowing to the earth, "but I cannot resist the temptation of claiming kindred with one through whom the horn of Israel may be so triumphantly exalted."

"Hush, man!" said Almamen, quickly, and looking sharply round; "I thy countryman! Art thou not, as thy speech betokens, an Israelite?"

"Yea," returned the Jew, "and of the same tribe as thy honoured father, peace be with his ashes! I remembered thee at once, boy though thou wert when thy steps shook off the dust against Granada. I remembered thee, I say, at once, on thy return; but I have kept thy secret, trusting that, through thy soul and genius, thy fallen brethren might put off sack-cloth and feast upon the house-tops."

Almamen looked hard at the keen, sharp Arab features of the Jew; and at length he answered, "And how can Israel be restored? Wilt thou fight for her?"

"I am too old, son of Issachar, to bear arms; but our tribes are many, and our youth strong. Amid these disturbances between dog and dog —"

"The lion may get his own," interrupted Almamen, impetuously; "let us hope it. Hast thou heard of the new persecutions against us that the false Nazarene king has already commenced in Cordova, — persecutions that make the heart sick and the blood cold?"

"Alas!" replied Elias, "such woes indeed have not failed to reach mine ear; and I have kindred, near and beloved kindred, wealthy and honoured men, scattered throughout that land."

"Were it not better that they should die on the field than by the rack?" exclaimed Almamen, fiercely. "God of my fathers! if there be yet a spark of manhood left amongst thy people, let thy servant fan it to a flame that shall burn as the fire burns the stubble, so that the earth may bare before the blaze!"

"Nay," said Elias, dismayed rather than excited by the vehemence of his comrade, "be not rash, son of Issachar, be not rash; peradventure thou wilt but exasperate the wrath

of the rulers, and our substance thereby will be utterly consumed."

Almamen drew back, placed his hand quietly on the Jew's shoulder, looked him hard in the face, and, gently laughing, turned away.

Elias did not attempt to arrest his steps. "Impracticable," he muttered; "impracticable and dangerous! I always thought so. He may do us harm: were he not so strong and fierce, I would put my knife under his left rib. Verily, gold is a great thing; and — Out on me! the knaves at home will be wasting the oil, now they know old Elias is abroad." Thereat the Jew drew his cloak around him, and quickened his pace.

Almamen in the mean while sought, through dark and subterranean passages known only to himself, his accustomed home. He passed much of the night alone; but ere the morning star announced to the mountain-tops the presence of the sun, he stood, prepared for his journey, in his secret vault, by the door of the subterranean passages, with old Ximen beside him.

"I go, Ximen," said Almamen, "upon a doubtful quest. Whether I discover my daughter and succeed in bearing her in safety from their contaminating grasp, or whether I fall into their snares and perish, there is an equal chance that I may return no more to Granada. Should this be so, you will be heir to such wealth as I leave in these places: I know that your age will be consoled for the lack of children when your eyes look upon the laugh of gold."

Ximen bowed low, and mumbled out some inaudible protestations and thanks. Almamen sighed heavily as he looked round the room. "I have evil omens in my soul, and evil prophecies in my books," said he, mournfully; "but the worst is here," he added, putting his finger significantly to his temples. "The string is stretched; one more blow would snap it."

As he thus said, he opened the door and vanished through that labyrinth of galleries by which he was enabled at all times to reach unobserved either the palace of the Alhambra or the gardens without the gates of the city.

Ximen remained behind a few moments in deep thought. "All mine if he dies," said he; "all mine if he does not return! All mine, all mine! and I have not a child nor a kinsman in the world to clutch it away from me!" With that he locked the vault, and returned to the upper air.

CHAPTER III.

THE FUGITIVE AND THE MEETING.

IN their different directions the rival kings were equally successful. Salobreña, but lately conquered by the Christians, was thrown into a commotion by the first glimpse of Boabdil's banners; the populace rose, beat back their Christian guards, and opened the gates to the last of their race of kings. The garrison alone, to which the Spaniards retreated, resisted Boabdil's arms, and, defended by impregnable walls, promised an obstinate and bloody siege.

Meanwhile, Ferdinand had no sooner entered Cordova than his extensive scheme of confiscation and holy persecution commenced. Not only did more than five hundred Jews perish in the dark and secret gripe of the Grand Inquisitor, but several hundred of the wealthiest Christian families, in whose blood was detected the hereditary Jewish taint, were thrown into prison; and such as were most fortunate purchased life by the sacrifice of half their treasures. At this time, however, there suddenly broke forth a formidable insurrection amongst those miserable subjects,—the Messenians of the Iberian Sparta. The Jews were so far aroused from their long debasement by omnipotent despair that a single spark, falling on the ashes of their ancient spirit, rekindled the flame of the descendants of the fierce warriors of Palestine. They were encouraged and assisted by the suspected Christians who had been involved in the same persecution; and the whole was headed by a man who appeared suddenly amongst them,

and whose fiery eloquence and martial spirit produced, at such a season, the most fervent enthusiasm. Unhappily, the whole details of this singular outbreak are withheld from us; only by wary hints and guarded allusions do the Spanish chroniclers apprise us of its existence and its perils. It is clear that all narrative of an event that might afford the most dangerous precedent, and was alarming to the pride and avarice of the Spanish king, as well as the pious zeal of the Church, was strictly forbidden; and the conspiracy was hushed in the dread silence of the Inquisition, into whose hands the principal conspirators ultimately fell. We learn only that a determined and sanguinary struggle was followed by the triumph of Ferdinand and the complete extinction of the treason.

It was one evening that a solitary fugitive, hard chased by an armed troop of the brothers of St. Hermandad, was seen emerging from a wild and rocky defile which opened abruptly on the gardens of a small and, by the absence of fortification and sentries, seemingly deserted castle. Behind him, in the exceeding stillness which characterizes the air of a Spanish twilight, he heard, at a considerable distance, the blast of the horn and the tramp of hoofs. His pursuers, divided into several detachments, were scouring the country after him, as the fishermen draw their nets from bank to bank, conscious that the prey they drive before the meshes cannot escape them at the last. The fugitive halted in doubt, and gazed round him. He was wellnigh exhausted; his eyes were blood-shot; the large drops rolled fast down his brow; his whole frame quivered and palpitated like that of a stag when he stands at bay. Beyond the castle spread a broad plain far as the eye could reach, without shrub or hollow to conceal his form; flight across a space so favourable to his pursuers was evidently in vain. No alternative was left, unless he turned back on the very path taken by the horsemen, or trusted to such scanty and perilous shelter as the copses in the castle garden might afford him. He decided on the latter refuge, cleared the low and lonely wall that girded the demesne, and plunged into a thicket of overhanging oaks and chestnuts.

At that hour and in that garden, by the side of a little

fountain, were seated two females, — the one of mature and somewhat advanced years; the other in the flower of virgin youth. But the flower was prematurely faded; and neither the bloom, nor sparkle, nor undulating play of feature that should have suited her age was visible in the marble paleness and contemplative sadness of her beautiful countenance.

"Alas! my young friend," said the elder of these ladies, "it is in these hours of solitude and calm that we are most deeply impressed with the nothingness of life. Thou, my sweet convert, art now the object, no longer of my compassion, but my envy; and earnestly do I feel convinced of the blessed repose thy spirit will enjoy in the lap of the Mother Church. Happy are they who die young, but thrice happy they who die in the spirit rather than the flesh, — dead to sin, but not to virtue; to terror, not to hope; to man, but not to God!"

"Dear Señora," replied the young maiden, mournfully, "were I alone on earth, Heaven is my witness with what deep and thankful resignation I should take the holy vows and forswear the past; but the heart remains human, however divine the hope that it may cherish. And sometimes I start, and think of home, of childhood, of my strange but beloved father, deserted and childless in his old age."

"Thine, Leila," returned the elder señora, "are but the sorrows our nature is doomed to. What matter, whether absence or death sever the affections? Thou lamentest a father; I, a son dead in the pride of his youth and beauty, — a husband languishing in the fetters of the Moor. Take comfort for thy sorrows in the reflection that sorrow is the heritage of all."

Ere Leila could reply, the orange-boughs that sheltered the spot where they sat were put aside, and between the women and the fountain stood the dark form of Almamen the Israelite. Leila rose, shrieked, and flung herself, unconscious, on his breast.

"O Lord of Israel!" cried Almamen, in a tone of deep anguish, "do I then at last regain my child? Do I press her to my heart? And is it only for that brief moment, when I stand upon the brink of death? Leila, my child, look up, —

smile upon thy father; let him feel, on his maddening and burning brow, the sweet breath of the last of his race, and bear with him at least one holy and gentle thought to the dark grave."

"My father, is it indeed my father?" said Leila, recovering herself, and drawing back, that she might assure herself of that familiar face. "It is thou! it is, it is! Oh, what blessed chance brings us together?"

"That chance is the destiny that hurries me to my tomb," answered Almamen, solemnly. "Hark! hear you not the sound of their rushing steeds, their impatient voices? They are on me now!"

"Who? Of whom speakest thou?"

"My pursuers, — the horsemen of the Spaniard."

"Oh, Señora, save him!" cried Leila, turning to Donna Inez, whom both father and child had hitherto forgotten, and who now stood gazing upon Almamen with wondering and anxious eyes. "Whither can he fly? The vaults of the castle may conceal him. This way; hasten!"

"Stay," said Inez, trembling, and approaching close to Almamen. "Do I see aright, and amidst the dark change of years and trial do I recognize that stately form which once contrasted to the sad eye of a mother the drooping and faded form of her only son? Art thou not he who saved my boy from the pestilence, who accompanied him to the shores of Naples, and consigned him to these arms? Look on me! Dost thou not recall the mother of thy friend?"

"I recall thy features dimly and as in a dream," answered the Hebrew; "and while thou speakest, there rush upon me the memories of an earlier time, in lands where Leila first looked upon the day, and her mother sang to me at sunset by the stream of the Euphrates and on the sites of departed empires. Thy son—I remember now; I had friendship then with a Christian, for I was still young."

"Waste not the time, Father, Señora!" cried Leila, impatiently, clinging still to her father's breast.

"You are right; nor shall your sire, in whom I thus wonderfully recognize my son's friend, perish if I can save him."

Inez then conducted her strange guest to a small door in the rear of the castle; and after leading him through some of the principal apartments, left him in one of the tiring-rooms adjoining her own chamber, and the entrance to which the arras concealed. She rightly judged this a safer retreat than the vaults of the castle might afford, since her great name and known intimacy with Isabel would preclude all suspicion of her abetting in the escape of the fugitive, and keep those places the most secure in which, without such aid, he could not have secreted himself.

In a few minutes several of the troop arrived at the castle; and on learning the name of its owner, contented themselves with searching the gardens and the lower and more exposed apartments, and then, recommending to the servants a vigilant look-out, remounted, and proceeded to scour the plain, over which now slowly fell the starlight and shade of night. When Leila stole at last to the room in which Almamen was hid, she found him, stretched on his mantle, in a deep sleep. Exhausted by all he had undergone, and his rigid nerves, as it were, relaxed by the sudden softness of that interview with his child, the slumber of that fiery wanderer was as calm as an infant's; and their relation almost seemed reversed, and the daughter to be as a mother watching over her offspring, when Leila seated herself softly by him, fixing her eyes—to which the tears came ever, ever to be brushed away—upon his worn but tranquil features, made yet more serene by the quiet light that glimmered through the casement. And so passed the hours of that night; and the father and the child—the meek convert, the revengeful fanatic—were under the same roof.

CHAPTER IV.

ALMAMEN HEARS AND SEES, BUT REFUSES TO BELIEVE; FOR THE BRAIN, OVERWROUGHT, GROWS DULL, EVEN IN THE KEENEST.

THE dawn broke slowly upon the chamber, and Almamen still slept. It was the Sabbath of the Christians, — that day on which the Saviour rose from the dead; thence named so emphatically and sublimely by the Early Church THE LORD'S DAY.¹ And as the ray of the sun flashed in the east, it fell like a glory over a crucifix placed in the deep recess of the Gothic casement, and brought startlingly before the eyes of Leila that face upon which the rudest of the Catholic sculptors rarely fail to preserve the mystic and awful union of the expiring anguish of the man with the lofty patience of the God. It looked upon her, that face; it invited, it encouraged, while it thrilled and subdued. She stole gently from the side of her father; she crept to the spot, and flung herself on her knees beside the consecrated image.

"Support me, O Redeemer!" she murmured; "support thy creature! strengthen her steps in the blessed path, though it divide her irrevocably from all that on earth she loves. And if there be a sacrifice in her solemn choice, accept, O Thou, the Crucified! accept it, in part atonement of the crime of her stubborn race; and hereafter let the lips of a maiden of Judæa implore thee, not in vain, for some mitigation of the awful curse that hath fallen justly upon her tribe."

As, broken by low sobs, and in a choked and muttered voice, Leila poured forth her prayer, she was startled by a deep groan; and turning in alarm she saw that Almamen had awaked, and, leaning on his arm, was now bending upon her his dark eyes, once more gleaming with all their wonted fire.

¹ Before the Christian era the Sunday was, however, called the Lord's day, — that is, the day of the Lord the Sun.

"Speak," he said, as she coweringly hid her face, — "speak to me, or I shall be turned to stone by one horrid thought. It is not before that symbol that thou kneelest in adoration; and my sense wanders if it tell me that thy broken words expressed the worship of an apostate? In mercy, speak!"

"Father!" began Leila; but her lips refused to utter more than that touching and holy word.

Almamen rose, and plucking the hands from her face, gazed on her some moments, as if he would penetrate her very soul; and Leila, recovering her courage in the pause, by degrees met his eyes unquailing, — her pure and ingenuous brow raised to his, and sadness, but not guilt, speaking from every line of that lovely face.

"Thou dost not tremble," said Almamen, at length breaking the silence, "and I have erred. Thou art not the criminal I deemed thee. Come to my arms!"

"Alas!" said Leila, obeying the instinct, and casting herself upon that rugged bosom, "I will dare, at least, not to disavow my God. Father, by that dread anathema which is on our race, which has made us homeless and powerless, outcasts and strangers in the land, — by the persecution and anguish we have known, teach thy lordly heart that we are rightly punished for the persecution and the anguish we doomed to Him whose footstep hallowed our native earth! FIRST, IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, DID THE STERN HEBREWS INFLICT UPON MANKIND THE AWFUL CRIME OF PERSECUTION FOR OPINION'S SAKE. The seed we sowed hath brought forth the Dead Sea fruit upon which we feed. I asked for resignation and for hope: I looked upon yonder cross, and I found both. Harden not thy heart; listen to thy child; wise though thou be, and weak though her woman spirit, listen to me."

"Be dumb," cried Almamen, in such a voice as might have come from the charnel, so ghostly and deathly sounded its hollow tone; then, recoiling some steps, he placed both his hands upon his temples; and muttered, "Mad, mad! yes, yes; this is but a delirium, and I am tempted with a devil!"

Oh, my child," he resumed, in a voice that became, on the sudden, inexpressibly tender and imploring, "I have been sorely tried, and I dreamed a feverish dream of passion and revenge. Be thine the lips and thine the soothing hand that shall wake me from it. Let us fly forever from these hated lands; let us leave to these miserable infidels their bloody contest, careless which shall fall. To a soil on which the iron heel does not clang, to an air where man's orisons rise in solitude to the Great Jehovah, let us hasten our weary steps. Come! while the castle yet sleeps, let us forth unseen,—the father and the child. We will hold sweet commune by the way. And hark ye, Leila," he added, in a low and abrupt whisper, "talk not to me of yonder symbol; for thy God is a jealous God, and hath no likeness in the graven image."

Had he been less exhausted by long travail and racking thoughts, far different, perhaps, would have been the language of a man so stern. But circumstance impresses the hardest substance; and despite his native intellect and affected superiority over others, no one, perhaps, was more human, in his fitful moods,—his weakness and his strength, his passion and his purpose,—than that strange man who had dared, in his dark studies and arrogant self-will, to aspire beyond humanity.

That was, indeed, a perilous moment for the young convert. The unexpected softness of her father utterly subdued her; nor was she sufficiently possessed of that all-denying zeal of the Catholic enthusiast to which every human tie and earthly duty has been often sacrificed on the shrine of a rapt and metaphysical piety. Whatever her opinions, her new creed, her secret desire of the cloister, fed as it was by the sublime, though fallacious, notion that in her conversion, her sacrifice, the crimes of her race might be expiated in the eyes of Him whose death had been the great atonement of a world, — whatever such higher thoughts and sentiments, they gave way at that moment to the irresistible impulse of household nature and of filial duty. Should she desert her father, and could that desertion be a virtue? Her heart put and answered both

questions in a breath. She approached Almamen, placed her hand in his, and said, steadily and calmly, "Father, where-soever thou goest, I will wend with thee."

But Heaven ordained to each another destiny than might have been theirs, had the dictates of that impulse been fulfilled.

Ere Almamen could reply, a trumpet sounded clear and loud at the gate.

"Hark!" he said, gripping his dagger, and starting back to a sense of the dangers round him. "They come, — my pursuers and my murderers; but these limbs are sacred from the rack."

Even that sound of ominous danger was almost a relief to Leila. "I will go," she said, "and learn what the blast betokens. Remain here, be cautious; I will return."

Several minutes, however, elapsed before Leila reappeared; she was accompanied by Donna Inez, whose paleness and agitation betokened her alarm. A courier had arrived at the gate to announce the approach of the queen, who with a considerable force was on her way to join Ferdinand, then, in the usual rapidity of his movements, before one of the Moorish towns that had revolted from his allegiance. It was impossible for Almamen to remain in safety in the castle, and the only hope of escape was departing immediately and in disguise.

"I have," she said, "a trusty and faithful servant with me in the castle, to whom I can, without anxiety, confide the charge of your safety; and even if suspected by the way, my name, and the companionship of my servant, will remove all obstacles. It is not a long journey hence to Guadix, which has already revolted to the Moors; there, till the armies of Ferdinand surround the walls, your refuge may be secure."

Almamen remained for some moments plunged in a gloomy silence; but at length he signified his assent to the plan proposed, and Donna Inez hastened to give the directions to his intended guide.

"Leila," said the Hebrew, when left alone with his daughter, "think not that it is for mine own safety that I stoop to

this flight from thee. No. But never till thou wert lost to me, by mine own rash confidence in another, did I know how dear to my heart was the last scion of my race, the sole memorial left to me of thy mother's love. Regaining thee once more, a new and a soft existence opens upon my eyes, and the earth seems to change, as by a sudden revolution, from winter into spring. For thy sake I consent to use all the means that man's intellect can devise for preservation from my foes. Meanwhile, here will rest my soul; to this spot, within one week from this period, — no matter through what danger I pass, — I shall return; then I shall claim thy promise. I will arrange all things for our flight, and no stone shall harm thy footstep by the way. The Lord of Israel be with thee, my daughter, and strengthen thy heart! But," he added, tearing himself from her embrace, as he heard steps ascending to the chamber, "deem not that, in this most fond and fatherly affection, I forget what is due to me and thee. Think not that my love is only the brute and insensate feeling of the progenitor to the offspring: I love thee for thy mother's sake; I love thee for thine own; I love thee yet more for the sake of Israel. If thou perish, if thou art lost to us, thou, the last daughter of the house of Issachar, then the haughtiest family of God's great people is extinct."

Here Inez appeared at the door, but withdrew, at the impatient and lordly gesture of Alnamen, who, without further heed of the interruption, resumed, —

"I look to thee and thy seed for the regeneration which I once trusted, fool that I was, mine own day might see effected. Let this pass. Thou art under the roof of the Nazarene. I will not believe that the arts we have resisted against fire and sword can prevail with thee. But if I err, awful will be the penalty! Could I once know that thou hadst forsaken thy ancestral creed, though warrior and priest stood by thee, though thousands and ten thousands were by thy right hand, this steel should save the race of Issachar from dishonour. Beware! Thou weapest; but, child, I warn, not threaten. God be with thee!"

He wrung the cold hand of his child, turned to the door,

and after such disguise as the brief time allowed him could afford, quitted the castle with his Spanish guide, who, accustomed to the benevolence of his mistress, obeyed her injunction without wonder, though not without suspicion.

The third part of an hour had scarcely elapsed, and the sun was yet on the mountain-tops, when Isabel arrived.

She came to announce that the outbreaks of the Moorish towns in the vicinity rendered the half-fortified castle of her friend no longer a secure abode; and she honoured the Spanish lady with a command to accompany her, with her female suite, to the camp of Ferdinand.

Leila received the intelligence with a kind of stupor. Her interview with her father, the strong and fearful contests of emotion which that interview occasioned, left her senses faint and dizzy; and when she found herself, by the twilight star, once more with the train of Isabel, the only feeling that stirred actively through her stunned and bewildered mind was that the hand of Providence conducted her from a temptation that, the Reader of all hearts knew, the daughter and woman would have been too feeble to resist.

On the fifth day from his departure Almamen returned, — to find the castle deserted, and his daughter gone.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE FERMENT OF GREAT EVENTS THE DREGS RISE.

THE Israelites did not limit their struggles to the dark conspiracy to which allusion has been made. In some of the Moorish towns that revolted from Ferdinand, they renounced the neutrality they had hitherto maintained between Christian and Moslem. Whether it was that they were inflamed by the fearful and wholesale barbarities enforced by Ferdinand and the Inquisition against their tribe; or whether they were stirred up by one of their own order, in whom was recog-

nized the head of their most sacred family; or whether, as is most probable, both causes combined, — certain it is that they manifested a feeling that was thoroughly unknown to the ordinary habits and policy of that peaceable people. They bore great treasure to the public stock, they demanded arms, and, under their own leaders, were admitted, though with much jealousy and precaution, into the troops of the arrogant and disdainful Moslems.

In this conjunction of hostile planets, Ferdinand had recourse to his favourite policy of wile and stratagem. Turning against the Jews the very treaty Almamen had once sought to obtain in their favour, he caused it to be circulated privately that the Jews, anxious to purchase their peace with him, had promised to betray the Moorish towns and Granada itself into his hands. The paper, which Ferdinand himself had signed in his interview with Almamen, and of which, on the capture of the Hebrew, he had taken care to repossess himself, he gave to a spy, whom he sent, disguised as a Jew, into one of the revolted cities.

Private intelligence reached the Moorish ringleader of the arrival of this envoy. He was seized, and the document found on his person. The form of the words drawn up by Almamen (who had carefully omitted mention of his own name, — whether that which he assumed, or that which, by birth, he should have borne) merely conveyed the compact that if by a Jew, within two weeks from the date therein specified, Granada was delivered to the Christian king, the Jews should enjoy certain immunities and rights.

The discovery of this document filled the Moors of the city to which the spy had been sent with a fury that no words can describe. Always distrusting their allies, they now imagined they perceived the sole reason of their sudden enthusiasm, of their demand for arms. The mob rose; the principal Jews were seized and massacred without trial, — some by the wrath of the multitude, some by the slower tortures of the magistrate. Messengers were sent to the different revolted towns, and, above all, to Granada itself, to put the Moslems on their guard against these unhappy enemies of either party. At

once covetous and ferocious, the Moors rivalled the Inquisition in their cruelty, and Ferdinand in their extortion.

It was the dark fate of Almamen, as of most premature and heated liberators of the enslaved, to double the terrors and the evils he had sought to cure. The warning arrived at Granada at a time in which the vizier, Jusef, had received the commands of his royal master, still at the siege of Salobreña, to use every exertion to fill the wasting treasuries. Fearful of new exactions against the Moors, the vizier hailed as a message from Heaven so just a pretext for a new and sweeping impost on the Jews. The spendthrift violence of the mob was restrained, because it was headed by the authorities, who were wisely anxious that the State should have no rival in the plunder it required; and the work of confiscation and robbery was carried on with a majestic and calm regularity which redounded no less to the credit of Jusef than it contributed to the coffers of the king.

It was late one evening when Ximen was making his usual round through the chambers of Almamen's house. As he glanced around at the various articles of wealth and luxury, he ever and anon burst into a low, fitful chuckle, rubbed his lean hands, and mumbled out: "If my master should die! if my master should die!"

While thus engaged, he heard a confused and distant shout; and listening attentively, he distinguished a cry, grown of late sufficiently familiar, of "Live, Jusef the just, — perish, the traitor Jews!"

"Ah," said Ximen, as the whole character of his face changed; "some new robbery upon our race. And this is thy work, son of Issachar! Madman that thou wert, to be wiser than thy sires, and seek to dupe the idolaters in the council-chamber and the camp, — their field, their vantage-ground; as the bazaar and the market-place are ours. None suspect that the potent santón is the traitor Jew, but I know it. I could give thee to the bow-string; and if thou wert dead, all thy goods and gold, even to the mule at the manger, would be old Ximen's."

He paused at that thought, shut his eyes, and smiled at the

prospect his fancy conjured up; and completing his survey, retired to his own chamber, which opened, by a small door, upon one of the back courts. He had scarcely reached the room when he heard a low tap at the outer door, and when it was thrice repeated, he knew that it was one of his Jewish brethren; for Ximen — as years, isolation, and avarice gnawed away whatever of virtue once put forth some meagre fruit from a heart naturally bare and rocky — still preserved one human feeling towards his countrymen. It was the bond which unites all the persecuted; and Ximen loved them, because he could not envy their happiness. The power, the knowledge, the lofty, though wild, designs of his master, stung and humbled him; he secretly hated, because he could not compassionate or condemn him. But the bowed frame and slavish voice and timid nerves of his crushed brotherhood presented to the old man the likeness of things that could not exult over him. Debased and aged and solitary as he was, he felt a kind of wintry warmth in the thought that even *he* had the power to protect!

He thus maintained an intercourse with his fellow Israelites, and often in their dangers had afforded them a refuge in the numerous vaults and passages, the ruins of which may still be descried beneath the mouldering foundations of that mysterious mansion. And as the house was generally supposed the property of an absent emir, and had been especially recommended to the care of the cadis by Boabdil, who alone of the Moors knew it as one of the dwelling-places of the santón, whose ostensible residence was in apartments allotted to him within the palace, — it was perhaps the sole place within Granada which afforded an unsuspected and secure refuge to the hunted Israelites.

When Ximen recognized the wonted signal of his brethren, he crawled to the door; and after the precaution of a Hebrew watchword, replied to in the same tongue, he gave admittance to the tall and stooping frame of the rich Elias.

"Worthy and excellent master," said Ximen, after again securing the entrance, "what can bring the honoured and wealthy Elias to the chamber of the poor hireling?"

"My friend," answered the Jew, "call me not wealthy nor honoured. For years I have dwelt within the city, safe and respected, even by the Moslemin, verily and because I have purchased, with jewels and treasure, the protection of the king and the great men. But now, alas! in the sudden wrath of the heathen — ever imagining vain things — I have been summoned into the presence of their chief rabbi, and only escaped the torture by a sum that ten years of labour and the sweat of my brow cannot replace. Ximen, the bitterest thought of all is that the frenzy of one of our own tribe has brought this desolation upon Israel."

"My lord speaks riddles," said Ximen, with well-feigned astonishment in his glassy eyes.

"Why dost thou wind and turn, good Ximen?" said the Jew, shaking his head. "Thou knowest well what my words drive at. Thy master is the pretended Almamen; and that recreant Israelite (if Israelite, indeed, still be one who hath forsaken the customs and the forms of his forefathers) is he who hath stirred up the Jews of Cordova and Guadix, and whose folly hath brought upon us these dread things. Holy Abraham! this Jew hath cost me more than fifty Nazarenes and a hundred Moors."

Ximen remained silent; and the tongue of Elias being loosed by the recollection of his sad loss, the latter continued: "At the first, when the son of Issachar reappeared and became a counsellor in the king's court, I indeed, who had led him, then a child, to the synagogue, — for old Issachar was to me dear as a brother, — recognized him by his eyes and voice. But I exulted in his craft and concealment; I believed he would work mighty things for his poor brethren, and would obtain for his father's friend the supplying of the king's wives and concubines with raiment and cloth of price. But years have passed: he hath not lightened our burdens; and by the madness that hath of late come over him, heading the heathen armies and drawing our brethren into danger and death, he hath deserved the curse of the synagogue and the wrath of our whole race. I find, from our brethren who escaped the Inquisition by the surrender of their substance,

that his unskilful and frantic schemes were the main pretext for the sufferings of the righteous under the Nazarene; and, again, the same schemes bring on us the same oppression from the Moor. Accursed be he, and may his name perish!"

Ximen sighed, but remained silent, conjecturing to what end the Jew would bring his invectives. He was not long in suspense. After a pause, Elias recommenced, in an altered and more careless tone: "He is rich, this son of Issachar, — wondrous rich."

"He has treasures scattered over half the cities of Africa and the Orient," said Ximen.

"Thou seest, then, my friend, that thy master hath doomed me to a heavy loss. I possess his secret; I could give him up to the king's wrath; I could bring him to the death. But I am just and meek: let him pay my forfeiture, and I will forego mine anger."

"Thou dost not know him," said Ximen, alarmed at the thought of a repayment which might grievously diminish his own heritage of Almamen's effects in Granada.

"But if I threaten him with exposure?"

"Thou wouldst feed the fishes of the Darro," interrupted Ximen. "Nay, even now, if Almamen learn that thou knowest his birth and race, tremble; for thy days in the land will be numbered."

"Verily," exclaimed the Jew, in great alarm, "then have I fallen into the snare; for these lips revealed to him that knowledge."

"Then is the righteous Elias a lost man, within ten days from that in which Almamen returns to Granada. I know my master, and blood is to him as water."

"Let the wicked be consumed!" cried Elias, furiously, stamping his foot, while fire flashed from his dark eyes; for the instinct of self-preservation made him fierce. "Not from me, however," he added, more calmly, "will come his danger. Know that there be more than a hundred Jews in this city who have sworn his death, — Jews who, flying hither from Cordova, have seen their parents murdered and their substance seized, and who behold in the son of Issachar the

cause of the murder and the spoil. They have detected the impostor, and a hundred knives are whetting even now for his blood: let him look to it! Ximen, I have spoken to thee as the foolish speak, — thou mayest betray me to thy lord; but from what I have learned of thee from our brethren, I have poured my heart into thy bosom without fear. Wilt thou betray Israel, or assist us to smite the traitor?"

Ximen mused for a moment, and his meditation conjured up the treasures of his master. He stretched forth his right hand to Elias, and when the Israelites parted, they were friends.

CHAPTER VI.

BOABDIL'S RETURN. — THE REAPPEARANCE OF FERDINAND BEFORE GRANADA.

THE third morning from this interview a rumour reached Granada that Boabdil had been repulsed in his assault on the citadel of Salobreña with a severe loss, that Hernando del Pulgar had succeeded in conducting to its relief a considerable force, and that the army of Ferdinand was on its march against the Moorish king. In the midst of the excitement occasioned by these reports a courier arrived to confirm their truth and to announce the return of Boabdil.

At nightfall the king, preceding his army, entered the city, and hastened to bury himself in the Alhambra. As he passed dejectedly into the women's apartments, his stern mother met him.

"My son," she said bitterly, "dost thou return, and not a conqueror?"

Before Boabdil could reply, a light and rapid step sped through the glittering arcades; and weeping with joy, and breaking all the Oriental restraints, Amine fell upon his bosom. "My beloved, my king, light of mine eyes, thou hast returned! Welcome; for thou art safe!"

The different form of these several salutations struck Boabdil forcibly. "Thou seest, my mother," said he, "how great the contrast between those who love us from affection, and those who love us from pride. In adversity, God keep me, O my mother, from thy tongue!"

"But I love thee from pride too," murmured Amine; "and for that reason is thine adversity dear to me, for it takes thee from the world to make thee more mine own. And I am proud of the afflictions that my hero shares with his slave."

"Lights there, and the banquet!" cried the king, turning from his haughty mother; "we will feast and be merry while we may. My adored Amine, kiss me!"

Proud, melancholy, and sensitive as he was in that hour of reverse, Boabdil felt no grief: such balm has Love for our sorrows, when its wings are borrowed from the dove! And although the laws of the Eastern life confined to the narrow walls of a harem the sphere of Amine's gentle influence; although, even in romance, THE NATURAL compels us to portray her vivid and rich colours only in a faint and hasty sketch,—yet still are left to the outline the loveliest and the noblest features of the sex: the spirit to arouse us to exertion, the softness to console us in our fall!

While Boabdil and the body of the army remained in the city, Muza, with a chosen detachment of the horse, scoured the country to visit the newly acquired cities and sustain their courage.

From this charge he was recalled by the army of Ferdinand, which once more poured down into the Vega, completely devastated its harvests, and then swept back to consummate the conquests of the revolted towns. To this irruption succeeded an interval of peace,—the calm before the storm. From every part of Spain the most chivalric and resolute of the Moors taking advantage of the pause in the contest, flocked to Granada; and that city became the focus of all that paganism in Europe possessed of brave and determined spirits.

At length Ferdinand, completing his conquests, and having refilled his treasury, mustered the whole force of his domin-

ions, — forty thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, and once more, and for the last time, appeared before the walls of Granada. A solemn and prophetic determination filled both besiegers and besieged; each felt that the crowning crisis was at hand.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONFLAGRATION. — THE MAJESTY OF AN INDIVIDUAL PASSION IN THE MIDST OF HOSTILE THOUSANDS.

It was the eve of a great and general assault upon Granada, deliberately planned by the chiefs of the Christian army. The Spanish camp (the most gorgeous Christendom had ever known) gradually grew calm and hushed. The shades deepened, the stars burned forth more serene and clear. Bright, in that azure air streamed the silken tents of the court, blazoned with heraldic devices and crowned by gaudy banners, which, filled by a brisk and murmuring wind from the mountains, flaunted gayly on their gilded staves. In the centre of the camp rose the pavilion of the queen, — a palace in itself. Lances made its columns; brocade and painted arras its walls; and the space covered by its numerous compartments would have contained the halls and outworks of an ordinary castle. The pomp of that camp realized the wildest dreams of Gothic coupled with Oriental splendour, — something worthy of a Tasso to have imagined, or a Beckford to create. Nor was the exceeding costliness of the more courtly tents lessened in effect by those of the soldiery in the outskirts, many of which were built from boughs still retaining their leaves, — savage and picturesque huts, — as if, realizing old legends, wild men of the woods had taken up the cross and followed the Christian warriors against the swarthy followers of Termagaunt and Mahound. There, then, extended that mighty camp in profound repose as the midnight threw deeper and longer shadows over the sward from the tented avenues and canvas

streets. It was at that hour that Isabel, in the most private recess of her pavilion, was employed in prayer for the safety of the king and the issue of the Sacred War. Kneeling before the altar of that warlike oratory, her spirit became rapt and absorbed from earth in the intensity of her devotions; and in the whole camp (save the sentries), the eyes of that pious queen were perhaps the only ones unclosed. All was profoundly still; her guards, her attendants, were gone to rest; and the tread of the sentinel without that immense pavilion, was not heard through the silken walls.

It was then that Isabel suddenly felt a strong grasp upon her shoulder as she still knelt by the altar. A faint shriek burst from her lips; she turned, and the broad, curved knife of an Eastern warrior gleamed close before her eyes.

"Hush! utter a cry, breathe more loudly than thy wont, and, queen though thou art, in the centre of swarming thousands, thou diest!"

Such were the words that reached the ear of the royal Castilian, whispered by a man of stern and commanding, though haggard, aspect.

"What is thy purpose? Wouldst thou murder me?" said the queen, trembling, perhaps for the first time, before a mortal presence.

"Thy life is safe, if thou strivest not to delude or to deceive me. Our time is short, — answer me! I am Almamen the Hebrew. Where is the hostage rendered to thy hands? I claim my child. She is with thee, I know it. In what corner of thy camp?"

"Rude stranger!" said Isabel, recovering somewhat from her alarm, "thy daughter is removed, I trust forever, from thine impious reach. She is not within the camp."

"Lie not, Queen of Castile," said Almamen, raising his knife. "For days and weeks I have tracked thy steps, followed thy march, haunted even thy slumbers, though men of mail stood as guards around them; and I know that my daughter has been with thee. Think not I brave this danger without resolves the most fierce and dread. Answer me, where is my child?"

"Many days since," said Isabel, awed, despite herself, by her strange position, "thy daughter left the camp for the house of God. It was her own desire. The Saviour hath received her into his fold."

Had a thousand lances pierced his heart, the vigour and energy of life could scarce more suddenly have deserted Almacen. The rigid muscles of his countenance relaxed at once, from resolve and menace, into unutterable horror, anguish, and despair. He recoiled several steps; his knees trembled violently; he seemed stunned by a death-blow. Isabel, the boldest and haughtiest of her sex, seized that moment of reprieve; she sprang forward, darted through the draperies into the apartments occupied by her train, and in a moment the pavilion resounded with her cries for aid. The sentinels were aroused; retainers sprang from their pillows; they heard the cause of the alarm; they made to the spot: when, ere they reached its partition of silk, a vivid and startling blaze burst forth upon them. The tent was on fire. The materials fed the flame like magic. Some of the guards had yet the courage to dash forward, but the smoke and the glare drove them back, blinded and dizzy. Isabel herself had scarcely time for escape, so rapid was the conflagration. Alarmed for her husband, she rushed to his tent, — to find him already awakened by the noise, and issuing from its entrance, his drawn sword in his hand. The wind, which had a few minutes before but curled the triumphant banners, now circulated the destroying flame. It spread from tent to tent almost as a flash of lightning that shoots along neighbouring clouds. The camp was in one continued blaze ere any man could dream of checking the conflagration.

Not waiting to hear the confused tale of his royal consort, Ferdinand, exclaiming, "The Moors have done this; they will be on us!" ordered the drums to beat and the trumpets to sound, and hastened in person, wrapped merely in his long mantle, to alarm his chiefs. While that well-disciplined and veteran army, fearing every moment the rally of the foe, endeavoured rapidly to form themselves into some kind of order, the flame continued to spread till the whole heavens

were illumined. By its light, cuirass and helmet glowed as in the furnace, and the armed men seemed rather like life-like and lurid meteors than human forms. The city of Granada was brought near to them by the intensity of the glow; and as a detachment of cavalry spurred from the camp to meet the anticipated surprise of the Paynims, they saw, upon the walls and roofs of Granada, the Moslems clustering, and their spears gleaming. But equally amazed with the Christians, and equally suspicious of craft and design, the Moors did not issue from their gates. Meanwhile the conflagration, as rapid to die as to begin, grew fitful and feeble, and the night seemed to fall with a melancholy darkness over the ruin of that silken city.

Ferdinand summoned his council. He had now perceived it was no ambush of the Moors. The account of Isabel, which at last he comprehended; the strange and almost miraculous manner in which Almamen had baffled his guards, and penetrated to the royal tent, — might have aroused his Gothic superstition, while it relieved his more earthly apprehensions, if he had not remembered the singular, but far from supernatural, dexterity with which Eastern warriors, and even robbers, continued then, as now, to elude the most vigilant precautions, and baffle the most wakeful guards; and it was evident that the fire which burned the camp of an army had been kindled merely to gratify the revenge or favour the escape of an individual. Shaking, therefore, from his kingly spirit the thrill of superstitious awe that the greatness of the disaster, when associated with the name of a sorcerer, at first occasioned, he resolved to make advantage out of misfortune itself. The excitement, the wrath, of the troops produced the temper most fit for action.

"And Heaven," said the king of Spain to his knights and chiefs, as they assembled round him, "has, in this conflagration, announced to the warriors of the Cross that henceforth their camp shall be the palaces of Granada! Woe to the Moslem with to-morrow's sun!"

Arms clanged, and swords leaped from their sheaths, as the Christian knights echoed the anathema: "WOE TO THE MOSLEM!"

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT BATTLE.

THE day slowly dawned upon that awful night; and the Moors, still upon the battlements of Granada, beheld the whole army of Ferdinand on its march towards their walls. At a distance lay the wrecks of the blackened and smouldering camp; while before them, gaudy and glittering pennons waving, and trumpets sounding, came the exultant legions of the foe. The Moors could scarcely believe their senses. Fondly anticipating the retreat of the Christians, after so signal a disaster, the gay and dazzling spectacle of their march to the assault filled them with consternation and alarm.

While yet wondering and inactive, the trumpet of Boabdil was heard behind, and they beheld the Moorish king, at the head of his guards, emerging down the avenues that led to the gate. The sight restored and exhilarated the gazers; and when Boabdil halted in the space before the portals, the shout of twenty thousand warriors rose ominously to the ears of the advancing Christians.

"Men of Granada," said Boabdil, as soon as the deep and breathless silence had succeeded to that martial acclamation, "the advance of the enemy is to their destruction! In the fire of last night, the hand of Allah wrote their doom. Let us forth, each and all! We will leave our homes unguarded; our hearts shall be their wall! True that our numbers are thinned by famine and by slaughter, but enough of us are yet left for the redemption of Granada. Nor are the dead departed from us, — the dead fight with us; their souls animate

our own. He who has lost a brother, becomes twice a man. On this battle we will set all. Liberty or chains! empire or exile! victory or death! Forward!"

He spoke, and gave the rein to his barb. It bounded forward and cleared the gloomy arch of the portals, and Boabdil el Chico was the first Moor who issued from Granada to that last and eventful field. Out, then, poured, as a river that rushes from caverns into day, the burnished and serried files of the Moorish cavalry. Muza came the last, closing the array. Upon his dark and stern countenance there spoke not the ardent enthusiasm of the sanguine king. It was locked and rigid; and the anxieties of the last dismal weeks had thinned his cheeks, and ploughed deep lines around the firm lips and iron jaw which bespoke the obstinate and unconquerable resolution of his character.

As Muza now spurred forward, and, riding along the wheeling ranks, marshalled them in order, arose the acclamation of female voices; and the warriors, who looked back at the sound, saw that their women—their wives and daughters, their mothers and their beloved (released from their seclusion by a policy which bespoke the desperation of the cause)—were gazing at them, with outstretched arms, from the battlements and towers. The Moors knew that they were now to fight for their hearths and altars in the presence of those who, if they failed, became slaves and harlots; and each Moslem felt his heart harden like the steel of his own sabre.

While the cavalry formed themselves into regular squadrons, and the tramp of the foemen came more near and near, the Moorish infantry, in miscellaneous, eager, and undisciplined bands, poured out, until, spreading wide and deep below the walls, Boabdil's charger was seen, rapidly careering amongst them, as, in short but distinct directions or fiery adjuration, he sought at once to regulate their movements and confirm their hot but capricious valour.

Meanwhile the Christians had abruptly halted; and the politic Ferdinand resolved not to incur the full brunt of a whole population in the first flush of their enthusiasm and despair. He summoned to his side Hernando del Pulgar, and

bade him, with a troop of the most adventurous and practised horsemen, advance towards the Moorish cavalry and endeavour to draw the fiery valour of Muza away from the main army. Then, splitting up his force into several sections, he dismissed each to different stations, — some to storm the adjacent towers, others to fire the surrounding gardens and orchards; so that the action might consist rather of many battles than of one, and the Moors might lose the concentration and union which made, at present, their most formidable strength.

Thus, while the Mussulmans were waiting in order for the attack, they suddenly beheld the main body of the Christians dispersing; and while yet in surprise and perplexed, they saw the fires breaking out from their delicious gardens, to the right and left of the walls, and heard the boom of the Christian artillery against the scattered bulwarks that guarded the approaches of the city.

At that moment a cloud of dust rolled rapidly towards the post occupied in the van by Muza, and the shock of the Christian knights, in their mighty mail, broke upon the centre of the prince's squadron.

Higher by several inches than the plumage of his companions, waved the crest of the gigantic Del Pulgar; and as Moor after Moor went down before his headlong lance, his voice, sounding deep and sepulchral through his visor, shouted out: "Death to the infidel!"

The rapid and dexterous horsemen of Granada were not, however, discomfited by this fierce assault; opening their ranks with extraordinary celerity, they suffered the charge to pass, comparatively harmless, through their centre, and then, closing in one long and bristling line, cut off the knights from retreat. The Christians wheeled round, and charged again upon their foe.

"Where art thou, O Moslem dog that wouldst play the lion? Where art thou, Muza Ben Abil Gazan?"

"Before thee, Christian!" cried a stern and clear voice; and from amongst the helmets of his people gleamed the dazzling turban of the Moor.

Hernando checked his steed, gazed a moment at his foe, turned back, for greater impetus to his charge, and in a moment more the bravest warriors of the two armies met, lance to lance.

The round shield of Muza received the Christian's weapon; his own spear shivered, harmless, upon the breast of the giant. He drew his sword, whirled it rapidly over his head, and for some minutes the eyes of the bystanders could scarcely mark the marvellous rapidity with which strokes were given and parried by those redoubted swordsmen.

At length Hernando, anxious to bring to bear his superior strength, spurred close to Muza, and leaving his sword pendant by a thong to his wrist, seized the shield of Muza in his formidable grasp, and plucked it away, with a force that the Moor vainly endeavoured to resist; Muza therefore suddenly released his hold, and ere the Spaniard had recovered his balance (which was lost by the success of his own strength, put forth to the utmost), he dashed upon him the hoofs of his black charger, and with a short but heavy mace, which he caught up from the saddle-bow, dealt Hernando so thundering a blow upon the helmet that the giant fell to the ground stunned and senseless.

To dismount, to repossess himself of his shield, to resume his sabre, to put one knee to the breast of his fallen foe, was the work of a moment; and then had Don Hernando del Pulgar been sped, without priest or surgeon, but that, alarmed by the peril of their most valiant comrade, twenty knights spurred at once to the rescue, and the points of twenty lances kept the Lion of Granada from his prey. Thither, with similar speed, rushed the Moorish champions; and the fight became close and deadly round the body of the still unconscious Christian. Not an instant of leisure to unlace the helmet of Hernando, by removing which, alone, the Moorish blade could find a mortal place, was permitted to Muza; and what with the spears and trampling hoofs around him, the situation of the Paynim was more dangerous than that of the Christian. Meanwhile, Hernando recovered his dizzy senses; and, made aware of his state, watched his occa-

sion and suddenly shook off the knee of the Moor. With another effort he was on his feet, and the two champions stood confronting each other, neither very eager to renew the combat. But on foot Muza, daring and rash as he was, could not but recognize his disadvantage against the enormous strength and impenetrable armour of the Christian. He drew back, whistled to his barb, that, piercing the ranks of the horsemen, was by his side on the instant, remounted, and was in the midst of the foe almost ere the slower Spaniard was conscious of his disappearance.

But Hernando was not delivered from his enemy. Clearing a space around him, as three knights, mortally wounded, fell beneath his sabre, Muza now drew from behind his shoulder his short Arabian bow, and shaft after shaft came rattling upon the mail of the dismounted Christian with so marvellous a celerity that, encumbered as he was with his heavy accoutrements, he was unable either to escape from the spot or ward off that arrowy rain, and felt that nothing but chance or our Lady could prevent the death which one such arrow would occasion, if it should find the opening of the visor or the joints of the hauberk.

"Mother of Mercy," groaned the knight, perplexed and enraged, "let not thy servant be shot down like a hart by this cowardly warfare, but if I must fall, be it with mine enemy, grappling hand to hand."

While yet muttering this short invocation, the war-cry of Spain was heard hard by, and the gallant company of Villena was seen scouring across the plain to the succour of their comrades. The deadly attention of Muza was distracted from individual foes, however eminent; he wheeled round, recollected his men, and in a serried charge met the new enemy in midway.

While the contest thus fared in that part of the field, the scheme of Ferdinand had succeeded so far as to break up the battle in detached sections. Far and near, plain, grove, garden, tower, presented each the scene of obstinate and determined conflict. Boabdil, at the head of his chosen guard, — the flower of the haughtier tribe of nobles who were jealous

of the fame and blood of the tribe of Muza, — and followed also by his gigantic Ethiopians, exposed his person to every peril with the desperate valour of a man who feels his own stake is greatest in the field. As he most distrusted the infantry, so amongst the infantry he chiefly bestowed his presence; and wherever he appeared, he sufficed, for the moment, to turn the changes of the engagement. At length, at mid-day, Ponce de Leon led against the largest detachment of the Moorish foot a strong and numerous battalion of the best-disciplined and veteran soldiery of Spain. He had succeeded in winning a fortress from which his artillery could play with effect; and the troops he led were composed partly of men flushed with recent triumph, and partly of a fresh reserve, now first brought into the field. A comely and a breathless spectacle it was to behold this Christian squadron emerging from a blazing copse, which they fired on their march, the red light gleaming on their complete armour as, in steady and solemn order, they swept on to the swaying and clamorous ranks of the Moorish infantry. Boabdil learned the danger from his scouts; and hastily quitting a tower from which he had for a while repulsed a hostile legion, he threw himself into the midst of the battalions menaced by the skilful Ponce de Leon. Almost at the same moment the wild and ominous apparition of Almamen, long absent from the eyes of the Moors, appeared in the same quarter, so suddenly and unexpectedly that none knew whence he had emerged; the sacred standard in his left hand, his sabre, bared and dripping gore, in his right, his face exposed, and its powerful features working with an excitement that seemed inspired, his abrupt presence breathed a new soul into the Moors.

“They come, they come!” he shrieked aloud. “The God of the East hath delivered the Goth into your hands!”

From rank to rank, from line to line, sped the santan; and as the mystic banner gleamed before the soldiery, each closed his eyes and muttered an “amen” to his adjurations.

And now to the cry of “Spain and Saint Iago” came trampling down the relentless charge of the Christian war.

At the same instant, from the fortress lately taken by Ponce de Leon the artillery opened upon the Moors and did deadly havoc. The Moslems wavered a moment when before them gleamed the white banner of Almamen; and they beheld him rushing, alone and on foot, amidst the foe. Taught to believe the war itself depended on the preservation of the enchanted banner, the Paynims could not see it thus rashly adventured without anxiety and shame; they rallied, advanced firmly, and Boabdil himself, with waving cimeter and fierce exclamations, dashed impetuously at the head of his guards and Ethiopians into the affray. The battle became obstinate and bloody. Thrice the white banner disappeared amidst the closing ranks, and thrice, like a moon from the clouds, it shone forth again, — the light and guide of the Pagan power.

The day ripened, and the hills already cast lengthening shadows over the blazing groves and the still Darro, whose waters, in every creek where the tide was arrested, ran red with blood, when Ferdinand, collecting his whole reserve, descended from the eminence on which hitherto he had posted himself. With him moved three thousand foot and a thousand horse, fresh in their vigour, and panting for a share in that glorious day. The king himself, who, though constitutionally fearless, from motives of policy rarely perilled his person save on imminent occasions, was resolved not to be outdone by Boabdil; and armed *cap-a-pie* in mail, so wrought with gold that it seemed nearly all of that costly metal, with his snow-white plumage waving above a small diadem that surmounted his lofty helm, he seemed a fit leader to that armament of heroes. Behind him flaunted the great gonfalon of Spain, and trump and cymbal heralded his approach. The Count de Tendilla rode by his side.

"Señor," said Ferdinand, "the infidels fight hard; but they are in the snare, — we are about to close the nets upon them. But what cavalcade is this?"

The group that thus drew the king's attention consisted of six squires, bearing, on a martial litter composed of shields, the stalwart form of Hernando del Pulgar.

"Ah, the dogs!" cried the king, as he recognized the pale

features of the darling of the army, — “have they murdered the bravest knight that ever fought for Christendom?”

“Not that, your Majesty,” quoth he of the Exploits, faintly, “but I am sorely stricken.”

“It must have been more than man who struck thee down,” said the king.

“It was the mace of Muza Ben Abil Gazan, an please you, sire,” said one of the squires; “but it came on the good knight unawares, and long after his own arm had seemingly driven away the Pagan.”

“We will avenge thee well,” said the king, setting his teeth; “let our own leeches tend thy wounds. Forward, sir knights! Saint Iago and Spain!”

The battle had now gathered to a vortex; Muza and his cavalry had joined Boabdil and the Moorish foot. On the other hand, Villena had been reinforced by detachments that in almost every other quarter of the field had routed the foe. The Moors had been driven back, though inch by inch; they were now in the broad space before the very walls of the city, which were still crowded by the pale and anxious faces of the aged and the women; and at every pause in the artillery, the voices that spoke of HOME were borne by that lurid air to the ears of the infidels. The shout that rang through the Christian force as Ferdinand now joined it struck like a death-knell upon the last hope of Boabdil. But the blood of his fierce ancestry burned in his veins, and the cheering voice of Almanen, whom nothing daunted, inspired him with a kind of superstitious frenzy.

“King against king, — so be it! Let Allah decide between us!” cried the Moorish monarch. “Bind up this wound, — ’t is well! A steed for the santón! Now, my prophet and my friend, mount by the side of thy king; let us at least fall together. Lelilies! Lelilies!”

Throughout the brave Christian ranks went a thrill of reluctant admiration as they beheld the Paynim king, conspicuous by his fair beard and the jewels of his harness, lead the scanty guard yet left to him once more into the thickest of their lines. Simultaneously Muza and his Zegris made

their fiery charge; and the Moorish infantry, excited by the example of their leaders, followed with unslackened and dogged zeal. The Christians gave way, — they were beaten back; Ferdinand spurred forward; and ere either party were well aware of it, both kings met in the same *mêlée*. All order and discipline for the moment lost, general and monarch were, as common soldiers, fighting hand to hand. It was then that Ferdinand, after bearing down before his lance Naim Reduon, second only to Muza in the songs of Granada, beheld opposed to him a strange form that seemed to that royal Christian rather fiend than man; his raven hair and beard, clotted with blood, hung like snakes about a countenance whose features, naturally formed to give expression to the darkest passions, were distorted with the madness of despairing rage. Wounded in many places, the blood dabbled his mail, while over his head he waved the banner wrought with mystic characters, which Ferdinand had already been taught to believe the workmanship of demons.

"Now, perjured king of the Nazarenes," shouted this formidable champion, "we meet at last, no longer host and guest, monarch and dervise, but man to man! I am Alammen! Die!"

He spoke; and his sword descended so fiercely on that anointed head that Ferdinand bent to his saddle-bow. But the king quickly recovered his seat, and gallantly met the encounter: it was one that might have tasked to the utmost the prowess of his bravest knight. Passions which in their number, their nature, and their excess animated no other champion on either side, gave to the arm of Almamen the Israelite a preternatural strength; his blows fell like rain upon the harness of the king; and the fiery eyes, the gleaming banner of the mysterious sorcerer who had eluded the tortures of his Inquisition, who had walked unscathed through the midst of his army, whose single hand had consumed the encampment of a host, filled the stout heart of the king with a belief that he encountered no earthly foe. Fortunately, perhaps, for Ferdinand and Spain, the contest did not last long. Twenty horsemen spurred into the *mêlée* to the

rescue of the plumed diadem. Tendilla arrived the first; with a stroke of his two-handed sword, the white banner was cleft from its staff and fell to the earth. At that sight the Moors round broke forth in a wild and despairing cry; that cry spread from rank to rank, from horse to foot. The Moorish infantry, sorely pressed on all sides, no sooner learned the disaster than they turned to fly: the rout was as fatal as it was sudden. The Christian reserve, just brought into the field, poured down upon them with a simultaneous charge. Boabdil, too much engaged to be the first to learn the downfall of the sacred insignia, suddenly saw himself almost alone, with his diminished Ethiopians and a handful of his cavaliers.

"Yield thee, Boabdil el Chico!" cried Tendilla from his rear, "or thou canst not be saved."

"By the Prophet, never!" exclaimed the king; and he dashed his barb against the wall of spears behind him, and with but a score or so of his guard cut his way through the ranks that were not unwilling, perhaps, to spare so brave a foe. As he cleared the Spanish battalions, the unfortunate monarch checked his horse for a moment and gazed along the plain: he beheld his army flying in all directions, save in that single spot where yet glittered the turban of Muza Ben Abil Gazan. As he gazed, he heard the panting nostrils of the chargers behind, and saw the levelled spears of a company despatched to take him, alive or dead, by the command of Ferdinand. He laid the reins upon his horse's neck and galloped into the city: three lances quivered against the portals as he disappeared through the shadows of the arch. But while Muza remained, all was not yet lost; he perceived the flight of the infantry and the king, and with his followers galloped across the plain. He came in time to encounter and slay, to a man, the pursuers of Boabdil; he then threw himself before the flying Moors.

"Do ye fly in the sight of your wives and daughters? Would ye not rather they beheld you die?"

A thousand voices answered him: "The banner is in the hands of the infidel, — all is lost!" They swept by him, and stopped not till they gained the gates.

But still a small and devoted remnant of the Moorish cavaliers remained to shed a last glory over defeat itself. With Muza, their soul and centre, they fought every atom of ground; it was, as the chronicler expresses it, as if they grasped the soil with their arms. Twice they charged into the midst of the foe; the slaughter they made, doubled their own number. But gathering on and closing in, squadron upon squadron, came the whole Christian army; they were encompassed, wearied out, beaten back, as by an ocean. Like wild beasts driven at length to their lair, they retreated with their faces to the foe; and when Muza came, the last, — his cimeter shivered to the hilt, — he had scarcely breath to command the gates to be closed and the portcullis lowered, ere he fell from his charger in a sudden and deadly swoon, caused less by his exhaustion than his agony and shame. So ended the last battle fought for the Monarchy of Granada.

CHAPTER II.

THE NOVICE.

It was in one of the cells of a convent renowned for the piety of its inmates and the wholesome austerity of its laws that a young novice sat alone. The narrow casement was placed so high in the cold gray wall as to forbid to the tenant of the cell the solace of sad or the distraction of pious thoughts, which a view of the world without might afford. Lovely indeed was the landscape that spread below, but it was barred from those youthful and melancholy eyes; for Nature might tempt to a thousand thoughts not of a tenor calculated to reconcile the heart to an eternal sacrifice of the sweet human ties. But a faint and partial gleam of sunshine broke through the aperture, and made yet more cheerless the dreary aspect and gloomy appurtenances of the cell; and the young novice seemed to carry on within herself that struggle of emotions

without which there is no victory in the resolves of virtue. Sometimes she wept bitterly, but with a low, subdued sorrow which spoke rather of despondency than passion; sometimes she raised her head from her breast and smiled as she looked upward, or as her eyes rested on the crucifix and the death's head that were placed on the rude table by the pallet on which she sat. They were emblems of death here, and life hereafter, which perhaps afforded to her the sources of a twofold consolation.

She was yet musing when a slight tap at the door was heard, and the abbess of the convent appeared.

"Daughter," said she, "I have brought thee the comfort of a sacred visitor. The Queen of Spain, whose pious tenderness is maternally anxious for thy full contentment with thy lot, has sent hither a holy friar whom she deems more soothing in his counsels than our brother Tomas, whose ardent zeal often terrifies those whom his honest spirit only desires to purify and guide. I will leave him with thee. May the saints bless his ministry!" So saying, the abbess retired from the threshold, making way for a form in the garb of a monk, with the hood drawn over the face. The monk bowed his head meekly, advanced into the cell, closed the door, and seated himself on a stool which, save the table and the pallet, seemed the sole furniture of the dismal chamber.

"Daughter," said he, after a pause, "it is a rugged and a mournful lot, this renunciation of earth and all its fair destinies and soft affections, to one not wholly prepared and armed for the sacrifice. Confide in me, my child; I am no dire Inquisitor, seeking to distort thy words to thine own peril. I am no bitter and morose ascetic. Beneath these robes still beats a human heart that can sympathize with human sorrows. Confide in me without fear. Dost thou not dread the fate they would force upon thee? Dost thou not shrink back? Wouldst thou not be free?"

"No," said the poor novice; but the denial came faint and irresolute from her lips.

"Pause," said the friar, growing more earnest in his tone; "pause, — there is yet time."

"Nay," said the novice, looking up with some surprise in her countenance, — "nay, even were I so weak, escape now is impossible. What hand could unbar the gates of the convent?"

"Mine!" cried the monk, with impetuosity. "Yes, I have that power. In all Spain, but one man can save thee, and I am he."

"You!" faltered the novice, gazing at her strange visitor with mingled astonishment and alarm. "And who are you that could resist the fiat of that Tomas de Torquemada before whom, they tell me, even the crowned heads of Castile and Arragon veil low?"

The monk half rose, with an impatient and almost haughty start, at this interrogatory; but reseating himself, replied, in a deep and half-whispered voice: "Daughter, listen to me! It is true that Isabel of Spain (whom the Mother of Mercy bless; for merciful to all is her secret heart, if not her outward policy), — it is true that Isabel of Spain, fearful that the path to heaven might be made rougher to thy feet than it well need be [there was a slight accent of irony in the monk's voice as he thus spoke], selected a friar of suasive eloquence and gentle manners to visit thee. He was charged with letters to yon abbess from the queen. Soft though the friar, he was yet a hypocrite. — Nay, hear me out! — He loved to worship the rising sun; and he did not wish always to remain a simple friar, while the Church had higher dignities of this earth to bestow. In the Christian camp, daughter, there was one who burned for tidings of thee, — whom thine image haunted; who, stern as thou wert to him, loved thee with a love he knew not of, till thou wert lost to him. Why dost thou tremble, daughter? Listen, yet! To that lover — for he was one of high birth — came the monk; to that lover the monk sold his mission. The monk will have a ready tale, that he was waylaid amidst the mountains by armed men, and robbed of his letters to the abbess. The lover took his garb, and he took the letters, and he hastened hither. Leila, beloved Leila, behold him at thy feet!"

The monk raised his cowl, and dropping on his knee be-

side her, presented to her gaze the features of the Prince of Spain.

"You!" said Leila, averting her countenance, and vainly endeavouring to extricate the hand which he had seized. "This is indeed cruel. You, the author of so many sufferings, such calumny, such reproach!"

"I will repair all," said Don Juan, fervently. "I alone—I repeat it—have the power to set you free. You are no longer a Jewess,—you are one of our faith; there is now no bar upon our loves. Imperious though my father, all dark and dread as is this new power which he is rashly erecting in his dominions, the heir of two monarchies is not so poor in influence and in friends as to be unable to offer the woman of his love an inviolable shelter alike from priest and despot. Fly with me; quit this dreary sepulchre ere the last stone close over thee forever! I have horses, I have guards at hand. This night it can be arranged. This night—oh, bliss!—thou mayest be rendered up to earth and love!"

"Prince," said Leila, who had drawn herself from Juan's grasp during this address, and who now stood at a little distance, erect and proud, "you tempt me in vain; or, rather, you offer me no temptation. I have made my choice,—I abide by it."

"Oh, bethink thee," said the prince, in a voice of real and imploring anguish,—"bethink thee well of the consequences of thy refusal! Thou canst not see them yet; thine ardour blinds thee. But when hour after hour, day after day, year after year, steals on in the appalling monotony of this sanctified prison; when thou shalt see thy youth withering without love, thine age without honour; when thy heart shall grow as stone within thee, beneath the looks of yon icy spectres; when nothing shall vary the aching dulness of wasted life save a longer fast or a severer penance,—then, then will thy grief be rendered tenfold by the despairing and remorseful thought that thine own lips sealed thine own sentence. Thou mayest think," continued Juan, with rapid eagerness, "that my love to thee was at first light and dishonouring. Be it so. I own that my youth has passed in idle wooings and the mockeries

of affection. But for the first time in my life I feel that *I love*. Thy dark eyes, thy noble beauty, even thy womanly scorn, have fascinated me. I—never yet disdained where I have been a suitor—acknowledge at last that there is a triumph in the conquest of a woman's heart. Oh, Leila! do not, do not reject me. You know not how rare and how deep a love you cast away."

The novice was touched. The present language of Don Juan was so different from what it had been before; the earnest love that breathed in his voice, that looked from his eyes, struck a chord in her breast,—it reminded her of her own unconquered, unconquerable love for the lost Muza. She was touched, then,—touched to tears; but her resolves were not shaken.

"Oh, Leila!" resumed the prince, fondly, mistaking the nature of her emotion, and seeking to pursue the advantage he imagined he had gained, "look at yonder sunbeam, struggling through the loophole of thy cell. Is it not a messenger from the happy world? Does it not plead for me? Does it not whisper to thee of the green fields, and the laughing vineyards, and all the beautiful prodigality of that earth thou art about to renounce forever? Dost thou dread my love? Are the forms around thee, ascetic and lifeless, fairer to thine eyes than mine? Dost thou doubt my power to protect thee? I tell thee that the proudest nobles of Spain would flock around my banner, were it necessary to guard thee by force of arms. Yet, speak the word, be mine, and I will fly hence with thee to climes where the Church has not cast out its deadly roots, and, forgetful of crowns and cares, live alone for thee. Ah, speak!"

"My lord," said Leila, calmly, and rousing herself to the necessary effort, "I am deeply and sincerely grateful for the interest you express, for the affection you avow. But you deceive yourself. I have pondered well over the alternative I have taken. I do not regret nor repent, much less would I retract it. The earth that you speak of, full of affections and of bliss to others, has no ties, no allurements for me. I desire only peace, repose, and an early death."

"Can it be possible," said the prince, growing pale, "that thou lovest another? Then, indeed, and then only would my wooing be in vain."

The cheek of the novice grew deeply flushed, but the colour soon subsided. She murmured to herself, "Why should I blush to own it now?" and then spoke aloud: "Prince, I trust I have done with the world; and bitter the pang I feel when you call me back to it. But you merit my candour: I *have* loved another; and in that thought, as in an urn, lie the ashes of all affection. That other is of a different faith. We may never, never meet again below; but it is a solace to pray that we may meet above. That solace and these cloisters are dearer to me than all the pomp, all the pleasures, of the world."

The prince sank down, and covering his face with his hands, groaned aloud, but made no reply.

"Go, then, Prince of Spain," continued the novice; "son of the noble Isabel, Leila is not unworthy of her cares. Go, and pursue the great destinies that await you. And if you forgive — if you still cherish a thought of — the poor Jewish maiden, soften, alleviate, mitigate, the wretched and desperate doom that awaits the fallen race she has abandoned for thy creed."

"Alas, alas!" said the prince, mournfully, "thee alone, perchance, of all thy race I could have saved from the bigotry that is fast covering this knightly land like the rising of an irresistible sea, — and thou rejectest me! Take time, at least, to pause, to consider. Let me see thee again to-morrow."

"No, prince, no; not again! I will keep thy secret only if I see thee no more. If thou persist in a suit that I feel to be that of sin and shame, then, indeed, mine honour —"

"Hold!" interrupted Juan, with haughty impatience, — "I torment, I harass you no more. I release you from my importunity. Perhaps already I have stooped too low." He drew the cowl over his features and strode sullenly to the door; but turning for one last gaze on the form that had so strangely fascinated a heart capable of generous emotions, — the meek and despondent posture of the novice, her tender

youth, her gloomy fate, melted his momentary pride and resentment. "God bless and reconcile thee, poor child!" he said, in a voice choked with contending passions; and the door closed upon his form.

"I thank thee, Heaven, that it was not Muza!" muttered Leila, breaking from a reverie in which she seemed to be communing with her own soul; "I feel that I could not have resisted *him*." With that thought she knelt down, in humble and penitent self-reproach, and prayed for strength.

Ere she had risen from her supplications, her solitude was again invaded by Torquemada, the Dominican.

This strange man, though the author of cruelties at which nature recoils, had some veins of warm and gentle feeling streaking, as it were, the marble of his hard character; and when he had thoroughly convinced himself of the pure and earnest zeal of the young convert, he relaxed from the grim sternness he had at first exhibited towards her. He loved to exert the eloquence he possessed, in raising her spirit, in reconciling her doubts. He prayed *for* her, and he prayed *beside* her, with passion and with tears.

He stayed long with the novice, and when he left her, she was, if not happy, at least contented. Her warmest wish now was to abridge the period of her novitiate, which, at her desire, the Church had already rendered merely a nominal probation. She longed to put irresolution out of her power, and to enter at once upon the narrow road through the strait gate.

The gentle and modest piety of the young novice touched the sisterhood; she was endeared to all of them. Her conversion was an event that broke the lethargy of their stagnant life. She became an object of general interest, of avowed pride, of kindly compassion; and their kindness to her, who from her cradle had seen little of her own sex, had a great effect towards calming and soothing her mind. But at night her dreams brought before her the dark and menacing countenance of her father. Sometimes he seemed to pluck her from the gates of heaven, and to sink with her into the yawning abyss below. Sometimes she saw him with her beside the

altar, but imploring her to forswear the Saviour before whose crucifix she knelt. Occasionally her visions were haunted, also, with Muza, but in less terrible guise. She saw his calm and melancholy eyes fixed upon her; and his voice asked, "Canst thou take a vow that makes it sinful to remember me?"

The night, that usually brings balm and oblivion to the sad, was thus made more dreadful to Leila than the day. Her health grew feebler and feebler, but her mind still was firm. In happier time and circumstance that poor novice would have been a great character; but she was one of the countless victims the world knows not of, whose virtues are in silent motives, whose struggles are in the solitary heart.

Of the prince she heard and saw no more. There were times when she fancied, from oblique and obscure hints, that the Dominican had been aware of Don Juan's disguise and visit. But if so, that knowledge appeared only to increase the gentleness, almost the respect, which Torquemada manifested towards her. Certainly, since that day, from some cause or other, the priest's manner had been softened when he addressed her; and he, who seldom had recourse to other arts than those of censure and of menace, often uttered sentiments half of pity and half of praise.

Thus consoled and supported in the day, thus haunted and terrified by night, but still not repenting her resolve, Leila saw the time glide on to that eventful day when her lips were to pronounce that irrevocable vow which is the epitaph of life. While in this obscure and remote convent progressed the history of an individual, we are summoned back to witness the crowning fate of an expiring dynasty.

CHAPTER III.

THE PAUSE BETWEEN DEFEAT AND SURRENDER.

THE unfortunate Boabdil plunged once more amidst the recesses of the Alhambra. Whatever his anguish or his despondency, none were permitted to share, or even to witness, his emotions. But he especially resisted the admission to his solitude, demanded by his mother, implored by his faithful Amine, and sorrowfully urged by Muza; those most loved or most respected were, above all, the persons from whom he most shrank.

Almamen was heard of no more. It was believed that he had perished in the battle. But he was one of those who, precisely as they are effective when present, are forgotten in absence. And in the mean while, as the Vega was utterly desolated, and all supplies were cut off, famine, daily made more terrifically severe, diverted the attention of each humbler Moor from the fall of the city to his individual sufferings.

New persecutions fell upon the miserable Jews. Not having taken any share in the conflict (as was to be expected from men who had no stake in the country which they dwelt in, and whose brethren had been taught so severe a lesson upon the folly of interference), no sentiment of fellowship in danger mitigated the hatred and loathing with which they were held; and as, in their lust of gain, many of them continued, amidst the agony and starvation of the citizens, to sell food at enormous prices, the excitement of the multitude against them — released by the state of the city from all restraint and law — made itself felt by the most barbarous excesses. Many of the houses of the Israelites were attacked by the mob, plundered, razed to the ground, and the owners tortured to death, to extort confession of imaginary wealth. Not to sell what was demanded was a crime; to sell it was a crime also. These

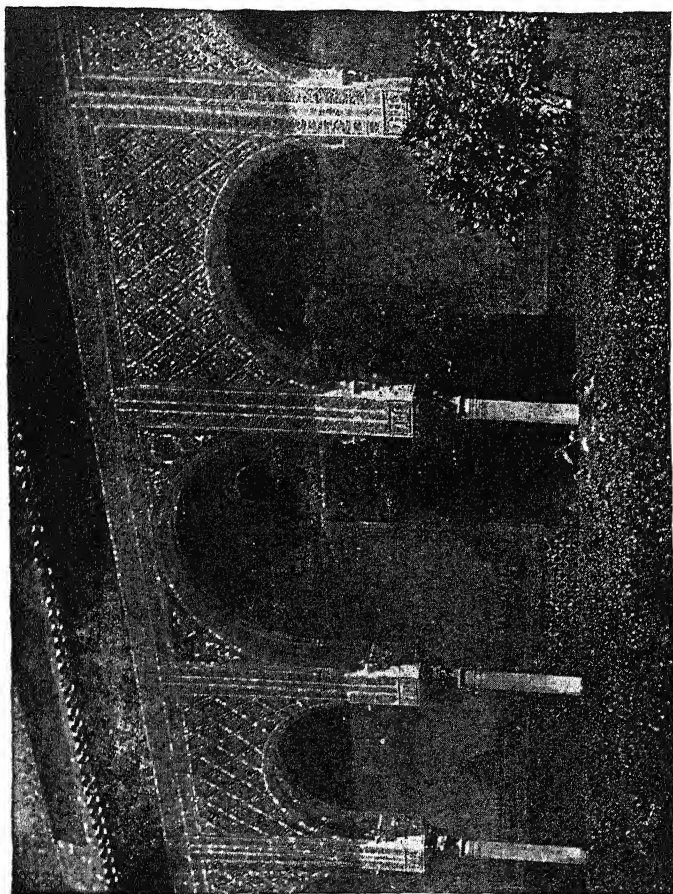
miserable outcasts fled to whatever secret places the vaults of their houses or the caverns in the hills within the city could yet afford them, cursing their fate, and almost longing even for the yoke of the Christian bigots.

Thus passed several days; the defence of the city was abandoned to its naked walls and mighty gates. The glaring sun looked down upon closed shops and depopulated streets, save when some ghostly and skeleton band of the famished poor collected, in a sudden paroxysm of revenge or despair, around the stormed and fired mansion of a detested Israelite.

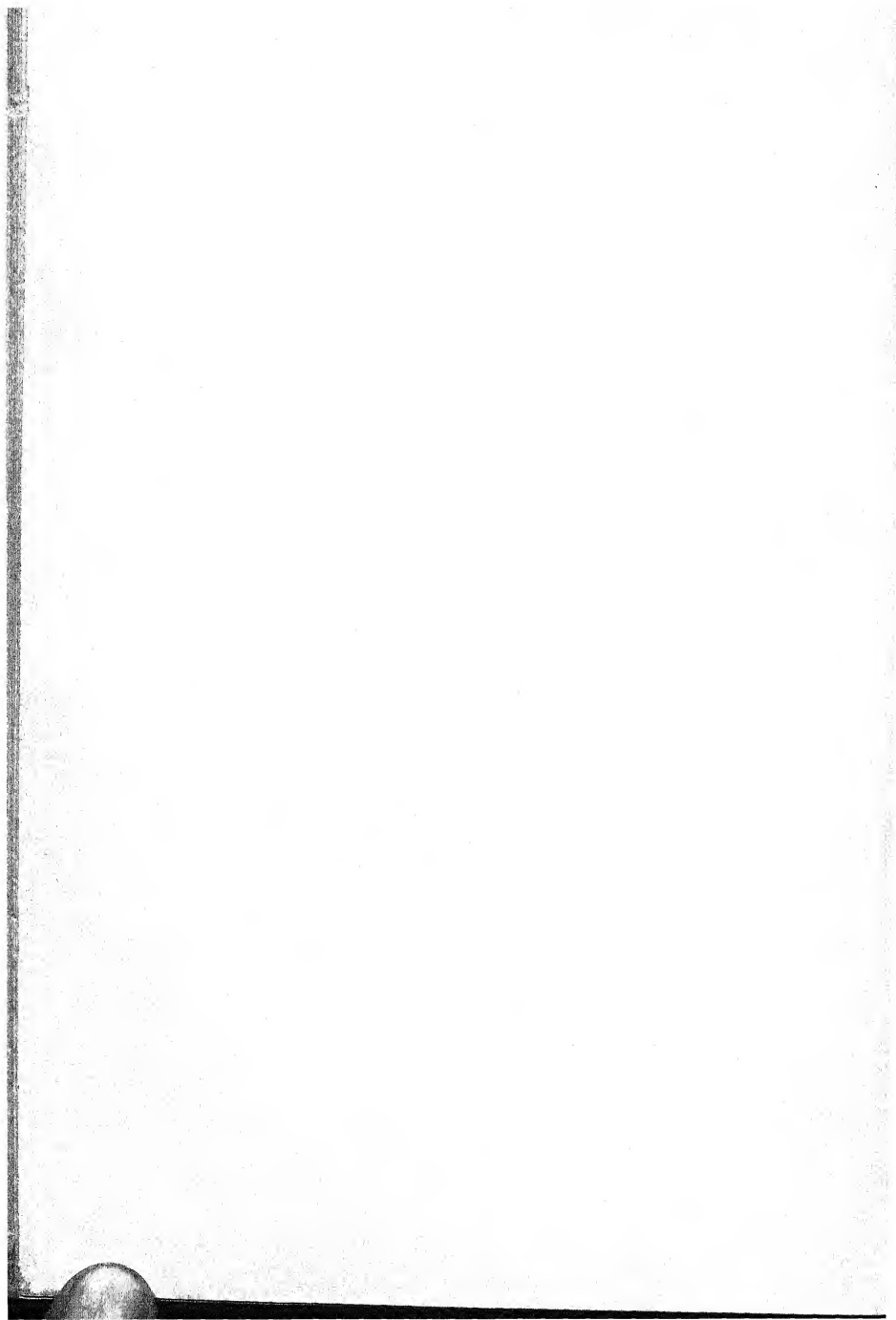
At length Boabdil aroused himself from his seclusion, and Muza, to his own surprise, was summoned to the presence of the king. He found Boabdil in one of the most gorgeous halls of his gorgeous palace.

Within the Tower of Comares is a vast chamber, still called the Hall of the Ambassadors. Here it was that Boabdil now held his court. On the glowing walls hung trophies and banners, and here and there an Arabian portrait of some bearded king. By the windows, which overlooked the most lovely banks of the Darro, gathered the santons and alfaquis, a little apart from the main crowd. Beyond, through half-veiling draperies, might be seen the great court of the Alberca, whose peristyles were hung with flowers; while in the centre, the gigantic basin, which gives its name to the court, caught the sunlight obliquely, and its waves glittered on the eye from amidst the roses that then clustered over it.

In the audience hall itself, a canopy, over the royal cushions on which Boabdil reclined, was blazoned with the heraldic insignia of Granada's monarchs. His guard and his mutes and his eunuchs and his courtiers and his counsellors and his captains were ranged in long files on either side the canopy. It seemed the last flicker of the lamp of the Moorish empire, that hollow and unreal pomp! As Muza approached the monarch, he was startled by the change of his countenance: the young and beautiful Boabdil seemed to have grown suddenly old; his eyes were sunken, his countenance was sown with wrinkles, and his voice sounded broken and hollow on the ears of his kinsman.



ENTRANCE TO THE HALL OF THE AMBASSADORS.



"Come hither, Muza," said he; "seat thyself beside me and listen as thou best canst to the tidings we are about to hear."

As Muza placed himself on a cushion a little below the king, Boabdil motioned to one amongst the crowd.

"Hamet," said he, "thou hast examined the state of the Christian camp: what news dost thou bring?"

"Light of the Faithful," answered the Moor, "it is a camp no longer, — it has already become a city. Nine towns of Spain were charged with the task. Stone has taken the place of canvas; towers and streets arise like the buildings of a genius; and the misbelieving king hath sworn that this new city shall not be left until Granada sees his standard on its walls."

"Go on," said Boabdil, calmly.

"Traders and men of merchandise flock thither daily; the spot is one bazaar; all that should supply our famishing country pours its plenty into their mart."

Boabdil motioned to the Moor to withdraw, and an alfaqui advanced in his stead.

"Successor of the Prophet and darling of the world!" said the reverend man, "the alfaquis and seers of Granada implore thee on their knees to listen to their voice. They have consulted the Books of Fate; they have implored a sign from the Prophet; and they find that the glory has left thy people and thy crown. The fall of Granada is predestined. God is great!"

"You shall have my answer forthwith," said Boabdil. "Abdelmelic, approach."

From the crowd came an aged and white-bearded man, the governor of the city.

"Speak, old man," said the king.

"Oh, Boabdil!" said the veteran, with faltering tones, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, "son of a race of kings and heroes! would that thy servant had fallen dead on thy threshold this day, and that the lips of a Moorish noble had never been polluted by the words that I now utter! Our state is hopeless; our granaries are as the sands of the desert;

there is in them life neither for beast nor man. The war-horse that bore the hero is now consumed for his food; the population of thy city with one voice cry for chains and — bread! I have spoken.”

“Admit the ambassador of Egypt,” said Boabdil, as Abdelmelic retired. There was a pause. One of the draperies at the end of the hall was drawn aside, and with the slow and sedate majesty of their tribe and land, paced forth a dark and swarthy train, the envoys of the Egyptian soldan. Six of the band bore costly presents of gems and weapons, and the procession closed with four veiled slaves, whose beauty had been the boast of the ancient valley of the Nile.

“Sun of Granada and day-star of the faithful,” said the chief of the Egyptians, “my lord, the soldan of Egypt, delight of the world and rose-tree of the East, thus answers to the letters of Boabdil. He grieves that he cannot send the succour thou demandest; and informing himself of the condition of thy territories, he finds that Granada no longer holds a seaport by which his forces (could he send them) might find an entrance into Spain. He implores thee to put thy trust in Allah, who will not desert his chosen ones, and lays these gifts, in pledge of amity and love, at the feet of my lord the king.”

“It is a gracious and well-timed offering,” said Boabdil, with a writhing lip; “we thank him.”

There was now a long and dead silence as the ambassadors swept from the hall of audience, when Boabdil suddenly raised his head from his breast and looked around his hall with a kingly and majestic look. “Let the heralds of Ferdinand of Spain approach.”

A groan involuntarily broke from the breast of Muza. It was echoed by a murmur of abhorrence and despair from the gallant captains who stood around; but to that momentary burst succeeded a breathless silence as from another drapery, opposite the royal couch, gleamed the burnished mail of the knights of Spain. Foremost of these haughty visitors, whose iron heels clanked loudly on the tessellated floor, came a noble and stately form in full armour, save the helmet, and with a

mantle of azure velvet, wrought with the silver cross that made the badge of the Christian war. Upon his manly countenance was visible no sign of undue arrogance or exultation, but something of that generous pity which brave men feel for conquered foes dimmed the lustre of his commanding eye, and softened the wonted sternness of his martial bearing. He and his train approached the king with a profound salutation of respect; and falling back, motioned to the herald that accompanied him, and whose garb, breast and back, was wrought with the arms of Spain, to deliver himself of his mission.

"To Boabdil," said the herald, with a loud voice, that filled the whole expanse and thrilled with various emotions the dumb assembly,— "to Boabdil el Chico, king of Granada, Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabel of Castile send royal greeting. They command me to express their hope that the war is at length concluded, and they offer to the king of Granada such terms of capitulation as a king, without dishonour, may receive. In the stead of this city, which their Most Christian Majesties will restore to their own dominion, as is just, they offer, O king, princely territories in the Alpuxarras mountains to your sway, holding them by oath of fealty to the Spanish crown. To the people of Granada their Most Christian Majesties promise full protection of property, life, and faith, under a government by their own magistrates and according to their own laws, exemption from tribute for three years, and taxes thereafter, regulated by the custom and ratio of their present imposts. To such Moors as, discontented with these provisions, would abandon Granada, are promised free passage for themselves and their wealth. In return for these marks of their royal bounty, their Most Christian Majesties summon Granada to surrender (if no succour meanwhile arrive) within seventy days. And these offers are now solemnly recorded in the presence and through the mission of the noble and renowned knight, Gonzalvo of Cordova, deputed by their Most Christian Majesties from their new city of Santa Fé."

When the herald had concluded, Boabdil cast his eye over

his thronged and splendid court. No glance of fire met his own; amidst the silent crowd a resigned content was alone to be perceived: the proposals exceeded the hope of the besieged.

"And," asked Boabdil, with a deep-drawn sigh, "if we reject these offers?"

"Noble prince," said Gonzalvo, earnestly, "ask us not to wound thine ears with the alternative. Pause, and consider of our offers; and if thou doubtest, O brave king! mount the towers of thine Alhambra, survey our legions marshalled beneath thy walls, and turn thine eyes upon a brave people, defeated, not by human valour, but by famine and the inscrutable will of God."

"Your monarchs shall have our answer, gentle Christian, perchance ere nightfall. And you, Sir Knight, who hast delivered a message bitter for kings to hear, receive at least our thanks for such bearing as might best mitigate the import. Our vizier will bear to your apartment those tokens of remembrance that are yet left to the monarch of Granada to bestow."

"Muza," resumed the king, as the Spaniards left the presence, "thou hast heard all. What is the last counsel thou canst give thy sovereign?"

The fierce Moor had with difficulty waited this license to utter such sentiments as death only could banish from that unconquerable heart. He rose, descended from the couch, and standing a little below the king, and facing the motley throng of all of wise or brave yet left to Granada, thus spoke:—

"Why should we surrender? Two hundred thousand inhabitants are yet within our walls; of these, twenty thousand, at least, are Moors, who have hands and swords. Why should we surrender? Famine presses us, it is true; but hunger, that makes the lion more terrible, shall it make the man more base? Do ye despair? So be it! Despair in the valiant ought to have an irresistible force. Despair has made cowards brave: shall it sink the brave to cowards? Let us arouse the people; hitherto we have depended too much upon the nobles. Let us collect our whole force, and march upon this new city while the soldiers of Spain are employed in their

new profession of architects and builders. Hear me, O God and prophet of the Moslem! hear one who never was forsworn! If, Moors of Granada, ye adopt my counsel, I cannot promise you victory, but I promise you never to live without it; I promise you at least your independence, — for the dead know no chains! If we cannot live, let us so die that we may leave to remotest ages a glory that shall be more durable than kingdoms. King of Granada, this is the counsel of Muza Ben Abil Gazan."

The prince ceased; but he, whose faintest word had once breathed fire into the dullest, had now poured out his spirit upon frigid and lifeless matter. No man answered, no man moved.

Boabdil alone, clinging to the shadow of hope, turned at last towards the audience.

"Warriors and sages!" he said, "as Muza's counsel is your king's desire, say but the word, and ere the hour-glass shed its last sand, the blast of our trumpet shall be ringing through the Vivarrambla."

"O king, fight not against the will of fate; God is great!" replied the chief of the alfaquis.

"Alas!" said Abdelmelic, "if the voice of Muza and your own fall thus coldly upon us, how can ye stir the breadless and heartless multitude?"

"Is such your general thought and your general will?" said Boabdil.

A universal murmur answered, "Yes!"

"Go, then, Abdelmelic," resumed the ill-starred king, "go with yon Spaniards to the Christian camp, and bring us back the best terms you can obtain. The crown has passed from the head of El Zogoybi; Fate sets her seal upon my brow. Unfortunate was the commencement of my reign, — unfortunate its end. Break up the divan."

The words of Boabdil moved and penetrated an audience never till then so alive to his gentle qualities, his learned wisdom, and his natural valour. Many flung themselves at his feet, with tears and sighs, and the crowd gathered round to touch the hem of his robe.

Muza gazed at them in deep disdain, with folded arms and heaving breast.

"Women, not men," he exclaimed, "ye weep as if ye had not blood still left to shed! Ye are reconciled to the loss of liberty, because ye are told ye shall lose nothing else. Fools and dupes! I see, from the spot where my spirit stands above you, the dark and dismal future to which ye are crawling on your knees, — bondage and rapine; the violence of lawless lust; the persecution of hostile faith; your gold wrung from you by torture; your national name rooted from the soil. Bear this, and remember me! Farewell, Boabdil! you I pity not; for your gardens have yet a poison, and your armories a sword. Farewell, nobles and santons of Granada! I quit my country while it is yet free."

Scarcely had he ceased, ere he had disappeared from the hall. It was as the parting genius of Granada!

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SOLITARY HORSEMAN.

It was a burning and sultry noon when, through a small valley skirted by rugged and precipitous hills, at the distance of several leagues from Granada, a horseman, in complete armour, wound his solitary way. His mail was black and unadorned, on his vizor waved no plume; but there was something in his carriage and mien, and the singular beauty of his coal-black steed, which appeared to indicate a higher rank than the absence of page and squire, and the plainness of his accoutrements, would have denoted to a careless eye. He rode very slowly; and his steed, with the license of a spoiled favourite, often halted lazily in his sultry path as a tuft of herbage or the bough of some overhanging tree offered its temptation. At length, as he thus paused, a noise was heard in a copse that clothed the descent of a steep mountain, and

the horse started suddenly back, forcing the traveller from his reverie. He looked mechanically upward, and beheld the figure of a man bounding through the trees with rapid and irregular steps. It was a form that suited well the silence and solitude of the spot, and might have passed for one of those stern recluses — half hermit, half soldier — who in the earlier Crusades fixed their wild homes amidst the sands and caves of Palestine. The stranger supported his steps by a long staff. His hair and beard hung long and matted over his broad shoulders. A rusted mail, once splendid with arabesque enrichments, protected his breast; but the loose gown — a sort of tartan which descended below the cuirass — was rent and tattered, and his feet were bare; in his girdle was a short curved cimeter, a knife or dagger, and a parchment roll clasped and bound with iron.

As the horseman gazed at this abrupt intruder on the solitude, his frame quivered with emotion; and raising himself to his full height, he called aloud, "Fiend or santan, — whatsoever thou art, — what seekest thou in these lonely places far from the king thy counsels deluded, and the city betrayed by thy false prophecies and unhallowed charms?"

"Ha!" cried Almamen, for it was indeed the Israelite, "by thy black charger and the tone of thy haughty voice I know the hero of Granada. Rather, Muza Ben Abil Gazan, why art thou absent from the last hold of the Moorish empire?"

"Dost thou pretend to read the future, and art thou blind to the present? Granada has capitulated to the Spaniard. Alone I have left a land of slaves, and shall seek, in our ancestral Africa, some spot where the footstep of the misbeliever hath not trodden."

"The fate of one bigotry is, then, sealed," said Almamen, gloomily; "but that which succeeds it is yet more dark."

"Dog!" cried Muza, couching his lance; "what art thou that thus blasphemest?"

"A Jew," replied Almamen, in a voice of thunder, and drawing his cimeter, — "a despised and despising Jew! Ask you more? I am the son of a race of kings. I was the worst enemy of the Moors till I found the Nazarene more hateful

than the Moslem; and then even Muza himself was not their more renowned champion. Come on, if thou wilt, man to man; I defy thee!"

"No, no," muttered Muza, sinking his lance; "thy mail is rusted with the blood of the Spaniard, and this arm cannot smite the slayer of the Christian. Part we in peace."

"Hold, prince!" said Almamen, in an altered voice; "is thy country the sole thing dear to thee? Has the smile of woman never stolen beneath thine armour? Has thy heart never beat for softer meetings than the encounter of a foe?"

"Am I human, and a Moor?" returned Muza. "For once you divine aright; and could thy spells bestow on these eyes but one more sight of the last treasure left to me on earth, I should be as credulous of thy sorcery as Boabdil."

"Thou lovest her still, then, this Leila?"

"Dark necromancer, hast thou read my secret, and knowest thou the name of my beloved one? Ah! let me believe thee indeed wise, and reveal to me the spot of earth which holds the delight of my soul! Yes," continued the Moor, with increased emotion, and throwing up his vizor, as if for air, — "yes; Allah forgive me! but when all was lost at Granada, I had still one consolation in leaving my fated birthplace, — I had license to search for Leila; I had the hope to secure to my wanderings in distant lands one to whose glance the eyes of the houris would be dim. But I waste words. Tell me where is Leila, and conduct me to her feet."

"Moslem, I will lead thee to her," answered Almamen, gazing on the prince with an expression of strange and fearful exultation in his dark eyes, — "I will lead thee to her; follow me. It is only yesternight that I learned the walls that confined her; and from that hour to this have I journeyed over mountain and desert, without rest or food."

"Yet what is she to thee?" asked Muza, suspiciously.

"Thou shalt learn full soon. Let us on."

So saying, Almamen sprang forward with a vigour which the excitement of his mind supplied to the exhaustion of his body. Muza wonderingly pushed on his charger, and endeavoured to draw his mysterious guide into conversation; but

Almamen scarcely heeded him. And when he broke from his gloomy silence, it was but in incoherent and brief exclamations, often in a tongue foreign to the ear of his companion. The hardy Moor, though steeled against the superstitions of his race, less by the philosophy of the learned than the contempt of the brave, felt an awe gather over him as he glanced, from the giant rocks and lonely valleys, to the unearthly aspect and glittering eyes of the reputed sorcerer; and more than once he muttered such verses of the Koran as were esteemed by his countrymen the counterspell to the machinations of the evil genii.

It might be an hour that they had thus journeyed together, when Almamen paused abruptly. "I am wearied," said he, faintly; "and though time presses, I fear that my strength will fail me."

"Mount, then, behind me," returned the Moor, after some natural hesitation. "Jew though thou art, I will brave the contamination for the sake of Leila."

"Moor," cried the Hebrew, fiercely, "the contamination would be mine. Things of yesterday, as thy Prophet and thy creed are, thou canst not sound the unfathomable loathing which each heart, faithful to the Ancient of Days, feels for such as thou and thine."

"Now, by the Kaaba," said Muza, and his brow became dark, "another such word, and the hoofs of my steed shall trample the breath of blasphemy from thy body!"

"I would defy thee to the death," answered Almamen, disdainfully; "but I reserve the bravest of the Moors to witness a deed worthy of the descendant of Jephtha. But hist! I hear hoofs."

Muza listened, and his sharp ear caught a distinct ring upon the hard and rocky soil. He turned round, and saw Almamen gliding away through the thick underwood, until the branches concealed his form. Presently a curve in the path brought in view a Spanish cavalier mounted on an Andalusian jennet. The horseman was gayly singing one of the popular ballads of the time; and as it related to the feats of the Spaniards against the Moors, Muza's haughty blood was

already stirred, and his mustache quivered on his lip. "I will change the air," muttered the Moslem, grasping his lance, when, as the thought crossed him, he beheld the Spaniard suddenly reel in his saddle and fall prostrate on the ground. In the same instant Almamen had darted from his hiding-place, seized the steed of the cavalier, mounted, and ere Muza recovered from his surprise, was by the side of the Moor.

"By what harm," said Muza, curbing his barb, "didst thou fell the Spaniard? Seemingly without a blow."

"As David felled Goliath,—by the pebble and the sling," answered Almamen, carelessly. "Now, then, spur forward, if thou art eager to see thy Leila."

The horsemen dashed over the body of the stunned and insensible Spaniard. Tree and mountain glided by; gradually the valley vanished, and a thick forest loomed upon their path. Still they made on, though the interlaced boughs and the raggedness of the footing somewhat obstructed their way; until, as the sun began slowly to decline, they entered a broad and circular space round which trees of the eldest growth spread their motionless and shadowy boughs. In the midmost sward was a rude and antique stone, resembling the altar of some barbarous and departed creed. Here Almamen abruptly halted, and muttered inaudibly to himself.

"What moves thee, dark stranger?" said the Moor; "and why dost thou mutter and gaze on space?"

Almamen answered not, but dismounted, hung his bridle to a branch of a scathed and riven elm, and advanced alone into the middle of the space. "Dread and prophetic power that art within me!" said the Hebrew, aloud, "this, then, is the spot that, by dream and vision, thou hast foretold me wherein to consummate and record the vow that shall sever from the spirit the last weakness of the flesh. Night after night hast thou brought before mine eyes, in darkness and in slumber, the solemn solitude that I now survey. Be it so; I am prepared!"

Thus speaking, he retired for a few moments into the wood, collected in his arms the dry leaves and withered branches which cumbered the desolate clay, and placed the fuel upon

the altar. Then, turning to the east, and raising his hands on high, he exclaimed, "Lo! upon this altar, once worshipped, perchance, by the heathen savage, the last bold spirit of thy fallen and scattered race dedicates, O Ineffable One! that precious offering Thou didst demand from a sire of old. Accept the sacrifice!"

As the Hebrew ended his adjuration he drew a phial from his bosom and sprinkled a few drops upon the arid fuel. A pale blue flame suddenly leaped up; and as it lighted the haggard but earnest countenance of the Israelite, Muza felt his Moorish blood congeal in his veins, and shuddered, though he scarce knew why. Almamen with his dagger severed from his head one of his long locks, and cast it upon the flame. He watched it until it was consumed; and then, with a stifled cry, fell upon the earth in a dead swoon. The Moor hastened to raise him; he chafed his hands and temples; he unbuckled the vest upon his bosom; he forgot that his comrade was a sorcerer and a Jew, so much had the agony of that excitement moved his sympathy.

It was not till several minutes had elapsed that Almamen, with a deep-drawn sigh, recovered from his swoon. "Ah, beloved one, bride of my heart!" he murmured, "was it for this that thou didst commend to me the only pledge of our youthful love? Forgive me! I restore her to the earth untainted by the Gentile." He closed his eyes again, and a strong convulsion shook his frame. It passed; and he rose as a man from a fearful dream, composed, and almost as if were refreshed, by the terrors he had undergone. The last glimmer of the ghastly light was dying away upon that ancient altar, and a low wind crept sighing through the trees.

"Mount, prince," said Almamen, calmly, but averting his eyes from the altar; "we shall have no more delays."

"Wilt thou not explain thy incantation?" asked Muza; "or is it, as my reason tells me, but the mummerly of a juggler?"

"Alas, alas!" answered Almamen, in a sad and altered tone, "thou wilt soon know all."

CHAPTER V.

THE SACRIFICE.

THE sun was now sinking slowly through those masses of purple cloud which belong to Iberian skies, when, emerging from the forest, the travellers saw before them a small and lovely plain, cultivated like a garden. Rows of orange and citron trees were backed by the dark-green foliage of vines, and these again found a barrier in girdling copses of chestnut, oak, and the deeper verdure of pines; while, far to the horizon, rose the distant and dim outline of the mountain range, scarcely distinguishable from the mellow colourings of the heaven. Through this charming spot went a slender and sparkling torrent that collected its waters in a circular basin, over which the rose and orange hung their contrasted blossoms. On a gentle eminence above this plain, or garden, rose the spires of a convent; and though it was still clear daylight, the long and pointed lattices were illumined within, and as the horsemen cast their eyes upon the pile, the sound of the holy chorus—made more sweet and solemn from its own indistinctness, from the quiet of the hour, from the sudden and sequestered loveliness of that spot, suiting so well the ideal calm of the conventual life—rolled its music through the odorous and lucent air.

But that scene and that sound, so calculated to soothe and harmonize the thought, seemed to arouse Almamen into agony and passion. He smote his breast with his clenched hand, and shrieking, rather than exclaiming, "God of my fathers! have I come too late?" buried his spurs to the rowels in the sides of his panting steed. Along the sward, through the fragrant shrubs, athwart the pebbly and shallow torrent, up the ascent to the convent, sped the Israelite. Muza, wondering and half reluctant, followed at a little distance. Clearer and

nearer came the voices of the choir; broader and redder glowed the tapers from the Gothic casements. The porch of the convent chapel was reached; the Hebrew sprang from his horse. A small group of the peasants dependent on the convent loitered reverently round the threshold; pushing through them, as one frantic, Almamen entered the chapel and disappeared.

A minute elapsed. Muza was at the door, but the Moor paused irresolutely ere he dismounted. "What is the ceremony?" he asked of the peasants.

"A nun is about to take the vows," answered one of them.

A cry of alarm, of indignation, of terror, was heard within. Muza no longer delayed; he gave his steed to the bystander, pushed aside the heavy curtain that screened the threshold, and was within the chapel.

By the altar gathered a confused and disordered group, — the sisterhood, with their abbess. Round the consecrated rail flocked the spectators, breathless and amazed. Conspicuous above the rest, on the elevation of the holy place, stood Almamen with his drawn dagger in his right hand, his left arm clasped around the form of a novice, whose dress, not yet replaced by the serge, bespoke her the sister fated to the veil; and on the opposite side of that sister, one hand on her shoulder, the other rearing on high the sacred crucifix, stood a stern, commanding form, in the white robes of the Dominican order: it was Tomas de Torquemada.

"Avaunt, Abaddon!" were the first words which reached Muza's ear as he stood, unnoticed, in the middle of the aisle; "here thy sorcery and thine arts cannot avail thee. Release the devoted one of God!"

"She is mine! she is my daughter! I claim her from thee as a father, in the name of the great Sire of Man!"

"Seize the sorcerer, seize him!" exclaimed the Inquisitor, as, with a sudden movement, Almamen cleared his way through the scattered and dismayed group, and stood with his daughter in his arms on the first step of the consecrated platform.

But not a foot stirred, not a hand was raised. The epithet bestowed on the intruder had only breathed a supernatural terror into the audience; and they would have sooner rushed

upon a tiger in his lair than on the lifted dagger and savage aspect of that grim stranger.

"Oh, my father," then said a low and faltering voice, that startled Muza as a voice from the grave, "wrestle not against the decrees of Heaven. Thy daughter is not compelled to her solemn choice. Humbly, but devotedly, a convert to the Christian creed, her only wish on earth is to take the consecrated and eternal vow."

"Ha!" groaned the Hebrew, suddenly relaxing his hold, as his daughter fell on her knees before him, "then have I indeed been told, as I have foreseen, the worst. The veil is rent, the spirit hath left the temple. Thy beauty is desecrated; thy form is but unhallowed clay. Dog!" he cried more fiercely, glaring round upon the unmoved face of the Inquisitor, "this is thy work. But thou shalt not triumph. Here, by thine own shrine, I spit at and defy thee, as once before amidst the tortures of thy inhuman court. Thus — thus — thus — Almamen the Jew delivers the last of his house from the curse of Galilee!"

"Hold, murderer!" cried a voice of thunder; and an armed man burst through the crowd and stood upon the platform.

It was too late: thrice the blade of the Hebrew had passed through that innocent breast; thrice was it reddened with that virgin blood. Leila fell in the arms of her lover; her dim eyes rested upon his countenance as it shone upon her, beneath his lifted vizor; a faint and tender smile played upon her lips, — Leila was no more.

One hasty glance Almamen cast upon his victim, and then, with a wild laugh that woke every echo in the dreary aisles, he leaped from the place. Brandishing his bloody weapon above his head, he dashed through the coward crowd and ere even the startled Dominican had found a voice, the tramp of his headlong steed rang upon the air; an instant, and all was silent.

But over the murdered girl leaned the Moor, as yet incredulous of her death, her head, still unshorn of its purple tresses, pillowed on his lap, her icy hand clasped in his, and her blood weltering fast over his armour. None disturbed

him; for, habited as the knights of Christendom, none suspected his faith, and all, even the Dominican, felt a thrill of sympathy at his distress. How he came hither, with what object, what hope, their thoughts were too much locked in pity to conjecture. There, voiceless and motionless, bent the Moor, until one of the monks approached and felt the pulse, to ascertain if life was, indeed, utterly gone.

The Moor at first waved him haughtily away; but when he divined the monk's purpose, suffered him in silence to take the beloved hand. He fixed on him his dark and imploring eyes; and when the father dropped the hand, and, gently shaking his head, turned away, a deep and agonizing groan was all that the audience heard from that heart in which the last iron of fate had entered. Passionately he kissed the brow, the cheeks, the lips of the hushed and angel face, and rose from the spot.

"What dost thou here, and what knowest thou of yon murderous enemy of God and man?" asked the Dominican, approaching.

Muza made no reply, as he stalked slowly through the chapel. The audience was touched to sudden tears. "Forbear!" said they, almost with one accord, to the harsh Inquisitor; "he hath no voice to answer thee."

And thus, amidst the oppressive grief and sympathy of the Christian throng, the unknown Paynim reached the door, mounted his steed, and as he turned once more and cast a hurried glance upon the fatal pile, the bystanders saw the large tears rolling down his swarthy cheeks.

Slowly that coal-black charger wound down the hillock, crossed the quiet and lovely garden, and vanished amidst the forest. And never was known, to Moor or Christian, the future fate of the hero of Granada. Whether he reached in safety the shores of his ancestral Africa and carved out new fortunes and a new name, or whether death, by disease or strife, terminated obscurely his glorious and brief career, mystery—deep and unpenetrated even by the fancies of the thousand bards who have consecrated his deeds—wraps in everlasting shadow the destinies of Muza Ben Abil Gazan

from that hour when the setting sun threw its parting ray over his stately form and his ebon barb, disappearing amidst the breathless shadows of the forest.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RETURN, — THE RIOT, — THE TREACHERY, — AND THE DEATH.

It was the eve of the fatal day on which Granada was to be delivered to the Spaniards, and in that subterranean vault beneath the house of Almamen, before described, three elders of the Jewish persuasion were met.

"Trusty and well-beloved Ximen," cried one, a wealthy and usurious merchant, with a twinkling and humid eye, and a sleek and unctuous aspect, which did not, however, suffice to disguise something fierce and crafty in his low brow and pinched lips, — "trusty and well-beloved Ximen," said this Jew, "truly thou hast served us well, in yielding to thy persecuted brethren this secret shelter. Here, indeed, may the heathen search for us in vain! Verily, my veins grow warm again, and thy servant hungereth and hath thirst."

"Eat, Isaac, eat, — yonder are viands prepared for thee; eat, and spare not. And thou, Elias, wilt thou not draw near the board? The wine is old and precious, and will revive thee."

"Ashes and hyssop, hyssop and ashes, are food and drink for me," answered Elias, with passionate bitterness; "they have razed my house, they have burned my granaries, they have molten down my gold. I am a ruined man!"

"Nay," said Ximen, who gazed at him with a malevolent eye; for so utterly had years and sorrows mixed with gall even the one kindlier sympathy he possessed that he could not resist an inward chuckle over the very afflictions he relieved, and the very impotence he protected, — "nay, Elias,

thou hast wealth yet left in the seaport towns sufficient to buy up half Granada."

"The Nazarene will seize it all," cried Elias; "I see it already in his grasp."

"Nay, thinkest thou so? And wherefore?" asked Ximen, startled into sincere, because selfish, anxiety.

"Mark me. Under license of the truce, I went, last night, to the Christian camp; I had an interview with the Christian king; and when he heard my name and faith, his very beard curled with ire. 'Hound of Belial!' he roared forth, 'has not thy comrade carrion, the sorcerer Almamen, sufficiently deceived and insulted the majesty of Spain? For his sake ye shall have no quarter. Tarry here another instant, and thy corpse shall be swinging to the winds! Go, and count over thy misgotten wealth: just census shall be taken of it; and if thou defraudest our holy impost by one piece of copper, thou shalt sup with Dives!' Such was my mission and mine answer. I return home to see the ashes of mine house. Woe is me!"

"And this we owe to Almamen, the pretended Jew!" cried Isaac from his solitary, but not idle, place at the board.

"I would this knife were at his false throat!" growled Elias, clutching his poniard with his long, bony fingers.

"No chance of that," muttered Ximen; "he will return no more to Granada. The vulture and the worm have divided his carcass between them ere this; and," he added, inly with a hideous smile, "his house and his gold have fallen into the hands of old, childless Ximen!"

"This is a strange and fearful vault," said Isaac, quaffing a large goblet of the hot wine of the Vega; "here might the Witch of Endor have raised the dead. Yon door, — whither doth it lead?"

"Through passages none that I know of, save my master, hath trodden," answered Ximen. "I have heard that they reach even to the Alhambra. Come, worthy Elias, thy form trembles with the cold; take this wine."

"Hist!" said Elias, shaking from limb to limb; "our pursuers are upon us, — I hear a step!"

As he spoke, the door to which Isaac had pointed, slowly opened, and Almamen entered the vault.

Had, indeed, a new Witch of Endor conjured up the dead, the apparition would not more have startled and appalled that goodly trio. Elias, griping his knife, retreated to the farthest end of the vault. Isaac dropped the goblet he was about to drain, and fell upon his knees. Ximen alone, growing, if possible, a shade more ghastly, retained something of self-possession as he muttered to himself: "He lives, and his gold is not mine! Curse him!"

Seemingly unconscious of the strange guests his sanctuary shrouded, Almamen stalked on, like a man walking in his sleep.

Ximen roused himself, softly unbarred the door which admitted to the upper apartments, and motioned to his comrades to avail themselves of the opening; but as Isaac, the first to accept the hint, crept across, Almamen fixed upon him his terrible eye, and appearing suddenly to awake to consciousness, shouted out, "Thou miscreant, Ximen, whom hast thou admitted to the secrets of thy lord? Close the door; these men must die!"

"Mighty master," said Ximen, calmly, "is thy servant to blame that he believed the rumour that declared thy death? These men are of our holy faith whom I have snatched from the violence of the sacrilegious and maddened mob. No spot but this seemed safe from the popular frenzy."

"Are ye Jews?" said Almamen. "Ah, yes! I know ye now,—things of the market-place and bazaar! Oh, ye are Jews indeed! Go, go! Leave me!"

Waiting no further license, the three vanished; but ere he quitted the vault, Elias turned back his scowling countenance on Almamen (who had sunk again into an absorbed meditation) with a glance of vindictive ire. Almamen was alone.

In less than a quarter of an hour Ximen returned to seek his master, but the place was again deserted.

It was midnight in the streets of Granada, — midnight, but not repose. The multitude, roused into one of their paroxysms of wrath and sorrow by the reflection that the morrow

was indeed the day of their subjection to the Christian foe, poured forth through the streets to the number of twenty thousand. It was a wild and stormy night; those formidable gusts of wind, which sometimes sweep in sudden winter from the snows of the Sierra Nevada, howled through the tossing groves and along the winding streets. But the tempest seemed to heighten, as if by the sympathy of the elements, the popular storm and whirlwind. Brandishing arms and torches, and gaunt with hunger, the dark forms of the frantic Moors seemed like ghouls or spectres, rather than mortal men, as, apparently without an object save that of venting their own disquietude or exciting the fears of earth, they swept through the desolate city.

In the broad space of the Vivarrambla the crowd halted, irresolute in all else, but resolved at least that something for Granada should yet be done. They were for the most armed in their Moorish fashion; but they were wholly without leaders,—not a noble, a magistrate, an officer, would have dreamed of the hopeless enterprise of violating the truce with Ferdinand. It was a mere popular tumult, — the madness of a mob; but not the less formidable, for it was an Eastern mob, and a mob with sword and shaft, with buckler and mail, — the mob by which Oriental empires have been built and overthrown! There, in the splendid space that had witnessed the games and tournaments of that Arab and African chivalry, — there, where for many a lustrum kings had reviewed devoted and conquering armies, assembled those desperate men, the loud winds agitating their tossing torches that struggled against the moonless night.

“Let us storm the Alhambra!” cried one of the band; “let us seize Boabdil, and place him in the midst of us; let us rush against the Christians, buried in their proud repose!”

“Lelilies, Lelilies! The Keys and the Crescent!” shouted the mob.

The shout died, and at the verge of the space was suddenly heard a once familiar and ever-thrilling voice.

The Moors who heard it turned round in amaze and awe, and beheld, raised upon the stone upon which the criers or

heralds had been wont to utter the royal proclamations, the form of Almamen the santón, whom they had deemed already with the dead.

"Moors and people of Granada!" he said, in a solemn but hollow voice, "I am with you still. Your monarch and your heroes have deserted you, but I am with you to the last! Go not to the Alhambra; the fort is impenetrable, the guard faithful. Night will be wasted, and day bring upon you the Christian army. March to the gates; pour along the Vega; descend at once upon the foe!"

He spoke, and drew forth his sabre, — it gleamed in the torchlight; the Moors bowed their head in fanatic reverence; the santón sprang from the stone, and passed into the centre of the crowd.

Then once more arose joyful shouts. The multitude had found a leader worthy of their enthusiasm, and in regular order they formed themselves rapidly, and swept down the narrow streets.

Swelled by several scattered groups of desultory marauders (the ruffians and refuse of the city), the infidel numbers were now but a few furlongs from the great gate whence they had been wont to issue on the foe. And then, perhaps, had the Moors passed these gates and reached the Christian encampment, lulled, as it was, in security and sleep, that wild army of twenty thousand desperate men might have saved Granada, and Spain might at this day possess the only civilized empire which the faith of Mohammed ever founded.

But the evil star of Boabdil prevailed. The news of the insurrection in the city reached him. Two aged men from the lower city arrived at the Alhambra, demanded and obtained an audience; and the effect of that interview was instantaneous upon Boabdil. In the popular frenzy he saw only a justifiable excuse for the Christian king to break the conditions of the treaty, raze the city, and exterminate the inhabitants. Touched by a generous compassion for his subjects, and actuated no less by a high sense of kingly honour, which led him to preserve a truce solemnly sworn to, he once more mounted his cream-coloured charger, with the two elders

who had sought him by his side, and at the head of his guard rode from the Alhambra. The sound of his trumpets, the tramp of his steeds, the voice of his heralds, simultaneously reached the multitude, and ere they had leisure to decide their course, the king was in the midst of them.

"What madness is this, O my people?" cried Boabdil, spurring into the midst of the throng,—"whither would ye go?"

"Against the Christian! against the Goth!" shouted a thousand voices. "Lead us on! The santón is risen from the dead, and will ride by thy right hand!"

"Alas!" resumed the king, "ye would march against the Christian king! Remember that our hostages are in his power; remember that he will desire no better excuse to level Granada with the dust, and put you and your children to the sword. We have made such treaty as never yet was made between foe and foe. Your lives, laws, wealth,—all are saved. Nothing is lost, save the crown of Boabdil. I am the only sufferer. So be it. My evil star brought on you these evil destinies; without me, you may revive, and be once more a nation. Yield to fate to-day, and you may grasp her proudest awards to-morrow. To succumb is not to be subdued. But go forth against the Christians, and if you win one battle, it is but to incur a more terrible war; if you lose, it is not honourable capitulation, but certain extermination, to which you rush! Be persuaded, and listen once again to your king."

The crowd were moved, were softened, were half-convinced. They turned in silence towards their santón; and Almamen did not shrink from the appeal, but stood forth, confronting the king.

"King of Granada," he cried aloud, "behold thy friend, thy prophet! Lo, I assure you victory!"

"Hold!" interrupted Boabdil; "thou hast deceived and betrayed me too long. Moors, know ye this pretended santón? He is of no Moslem creed. He is a hound of Israel who would sell you to the best bidder. Slay him!"

"Ha!" cried Almamen, "and who is my accuser?"

"Thy servant,—behold him!" At these words the royal

guards lifted their torches, and the glare fell redly on the death-like features of Ximen.

"Light of the world, there be other Jews that know him," said the traitor.

"Will ye suffer a Jew to lead you, O race of the prophet?" cried the king.

The crowd stood confused and bewildered. Almamen felt his hour was come; he remained silent, his arms folded, his brow erect.

"Be there any of the tribes of Moisa amongst the crowd?" cried Boabdil, pursuing his advantage. "If so, let them approach and testify what they know." Forth came, not from the crowd, but from amongst Boabdil's train, a well-known Israelite.

"We disown this man of blood and fraud," said Elias, bowing to the earth; "but he was of our creed."

"Speak, false santón, art thou dumb?" cried the king.

"A curse light on thee, dull fool!" cried Almamen, fiercely. "What matters who the instrument that would have restored to thee thy throne? Yes! I, who have ruled thy councils, who have led thine armies, I am of the race of Joshua and of Samuel, — and the Lord of Hosts is the God of Almamen!"

A shudder ran through that mighty multitude; but the looks, the mien, and the voice of the man awed them, and not a weapon was raised against him. He might, even then, have passed scathless through the crowd; he might have borne to other climes his burning passions and his torturing woes: but his care for life was past; he desired but to curse his dupes, and to die. He paused, looked round, and burst into a laugh of such bitter and haughty scorn as the tempted of earth may hear in the halls below from the lips of Eblis.

"Yes," he exclaimed, "such I am! I have been your idol and your lord. I may be your victim, but in death I am your vanquisher. Christian and Moslem alike my foe, I would have trampled upon both. But the Christian, wiser than you, gave me smooth words, and I would have sold you to his power; wickeder than you, he deceived me, and I would have crushed him, that I might have continued to deceive and rule

the puppets that ye call your chiefs. But they for whom I toiled and laboured and sinned; for whom I surrendered peace and ease, yea, and a daughter's person and a daughter's blood, — they have betrayed me to your hands, and the Curse of Old rests with them evermore. Amen! The disguise is rent; Almamen the santón is the son of Issachar the Jew!"

More might he have said, but the spell was broken. With a ferocious yell those living waves of the multitude rushed over the stern fanatic. Six cimeters passed through him, and he fell not; at the seventh he was a corpse. Trodden in the clay, then whirled aloft, limb torn from limb, — ere a man could have drawn breath nine times, scarce a vestige of the human form was left to the mangled and bloody clay.

One victim sufficed to slake the wrath of the crowd. They gathered like wild beasts whose hunger is appeased, around their monarch, who in vain had endeavoured to stay their summary revenge, and who now, pale and breathless, shrank from the passions he had excited. He faltered forth a few words of remonstrance and exhortation, turned the head of his steed, and took his way to his palace.

The crowd dispersed, but not yet to their homes. The crime of Almamen worked against his whole race. Some rushed to the Jews' quarter, which they set on fire; others to the lonely mansion of Almamen.

Ximen on quitting the king had been before the mob. Not anticipating such an effect of the popular rage, he had hastened to the house, which he now deemed at length his own. He had just reached the treasury of his dead lord, he had just feasted his eyes on the massive ingots and glittering gems; in the lust of his heart he had just cried aloud, "And these are mine!" — when he heard the roar of the mob below the wall, when he saw the glare of their torches against the casement. It was in vain that he shrieked aloud, "I am the man that exposed the Jew!" the wild winds scattered his words over a deafened audience. Driven from his chamber by the smoke and flame, afraid to venture forth amongst the crowd, the miser loaded himself with the most precious of the store; he descended the steps, he bent his way to the secret vault, when

suddenly the floor, pierced by the flames, crashed under him, and the fire rushed up in a fiercer and more rapid volume as the death-shriek broke through that lurid shroud.

Such were the principal events of the last night of the Moorish dynasty in Granada.

CHAPTER VII.

THE END.

DAY dawned upon Granada; the populace had sought their homes, and a profound quiet wrapped the streets, save where, from the fires committed in the late tumult, was yet heard the crash of roofs or the crackle of the light and fragrant timber employed in those pavilions of the summer. The manner in which the mansions of Granada were built, each separated from the other by extensive gardens, fortunately prevented the flames from extending. But the inhabitants cared so little for the hazard that not a single guard remained to watch the result. Now and then some miserable forms in the Jewish gown might be seen cowering by the ruins of their house, like the souls that, according to Plato, watch in charnels over their own mouldering bodies. Day dawned, and the beams of the winter sun, smiling away the clouds of the past night, played cheerily on the murmuring waves of the Xenil and the Darro.

Alone upon a balcony commanding that stately landscape stood the last of the Moorish kings. He had sought to bring to his aid all the lessons of the philosophy he had cultivated.

"What are we," thought the musing prince, "that we should fill the world with ourselves, we kings! Earth resounds with the crash of my falling throne; on the ear of races unborn the echo will live prolonged. But what have I lost? Nothing that was necessary to my happiness, my repose, — nothing save the source of all my wretchedness, the Marah of my

life! Shall I less enjoy heaven and earth, or thought or action, or man's more material luxuries of food or sleep, — the common and the cheap desires of all? Arouse thee, then, O heart within me! Many and deep emotions of sorrow or of joy are yet left to break the monotony of existence."

He paused, and at the distance his eye fell upon the lonely minarets of the distant and deserted palace of Muza Ben Abil Gazan.

"Thou wert right, then," resumed the king, — "thou wert right, brave spirit, not to pity Boabdil. But not because death was in his power; man's soul is greater than his fortunes, and there is majesty in a life that towers above the ruins that fall around its path."

He turned away, and his cheek suddenly grew pale, for he heard, in the courts below, the tread of hoofs, the bustle of preparation: it was the hour for his departure. His philosophy vanished; he groaned aloud, and re-entered the chamber just as his vizier and the chief of his guard broke upon his solitude.

The old vizier attempted to speak, but his voice failed him.

"It is time, then, to depart," said Boabdil, with calmness: "let it be so: render up the palace and the fortress, and join thy friend, no more thy monarch, in his new home."

He stayed not for reply; he hurried on, descended to the court, flung himself on his barb, and with a small and saddened train passed through the gate which we yet survey, by a blackened and crumbling tower overgrown with vines and ivy; thence amidst gardens now appertaining to the convent of the victor faith, he took his mournful and unwitnessed way. When he came to the middle of the hill that rises above those gardens, the steel of the Spanish armour gleamed upon him as the detachment sent to occupy the palace marched over the summit in steady order and profound silence.

At the head of this vanguard rode, upon a snow-white palfrey, the Bishop of Avila, followed by a long train of barefooted monks. They halted as Boabdil approached, and the grave bishop saluted him with the air of one who addresses an infidel and an inferior. With the quick sense of dignity

common to the great, and yet more to the fallen, Boabdil felt, but resented not, the pride of the ecclesiastic. "Go, Christian," said he, mildly, "the gates of the Alhambra are open, and Allah has bestowed the palace and the city upon your king. May his virtues atone the faults of Boabdil!" So saying, and waiting no answer, he rode on, without looking to the right or left. The Spaniards also pursued their way. The sun had fairly risen above the mountains when Boabdil and his train beheld, from the eminence on which they were, the whole armament of Spain; and at the same moment, louder than the tramp of horse or the flash of arms, was heard distinctly the solemn chant of *Te Deum*, which preceded the blaze of the unfurled and lofty standards. Boabdil, himself still silent, heard the groans and exclamations of his train; he turned to cheer or chide them, and then saw from his own watch-tower, with the sun shining full upon its pure and dazzling surface, the silver cross of Spain. His Alhambra was already in the hands of the foe, while beside that badge of the holy war waved the gay and flaunting flag of Saint Iago, the canonized Mars of the chivalry of Spain.

At that sight the king's voice died within him; he gave the rein to his barb, impatient to close the fatal ceremonial, and did not slacken his speed till almost within bowshot of the first ranks of the army. Never had Christian war assumed a more splendid or imposing aspect. Far as the eye could reach extended the glittering and gorgeous lines of that goodly power, bristling with sunlit spears and blazoned banners; while beside murmured and glowed and danced, the silver and laughing Xenil, careless what lord should possess, for his little day, the banks that bloomed by its everlasting course. By a small mosque halted the flower of the army. Surrounded by the arch-priests of that mighty hierarchy, the peers and princes of a court that rivalled the Rolands of Charlemagne, was seen the kingly form of Ferdinand himself, with Isabel at his right hand, and the high-born dames of Spain, relieving, with their gay colours and sparkling gems, the sterner splendour of the crested helmet and polished mail.

Within sight of the royal group Boabdil halted, composed his aspect so as best to conceal his soul, and, a little in advance of his scanty train, but never, in mien and majesty, more a king, the son of Abdallah met his haughty conqueror.

At the sight of his princely countenance and golden hair, his comely and commanding beauty, made more touching by youth, a thrill of compassionate admiration ran through that assembly of the brave and fair. Ferdinand and Isabel slowly advanced to meet their late rival, — their new subject; and as Boabdil would have dismounted, the Spanish king placed his hand upon his shoulder. "Brother and prince," said he, "forget thy sorrows; and may our friendship hereafter console thee for reverses against which thou hast contended as a hero and a king, — resisting man, but resigned at length to God!"

Boabdil did not affect to return this bitter, but unintentional, mockery of compliment. He bowed his head, and remained a moment silent; then, motioning to his train, four of his officers approached, and kneeling beside Ferdinand, proffered to him upon a silver buckler the keys of the city.

"O king," then said Boabdil, "accept the keys of the last hold which has resisted the arms of Spain! The empire of the Moslem is no more. Thine are the city and the people of Granada; yielding to thy prowess, they yet confide in thy mercy."

"They do well," said the king; "our promises shall not be broken. But since we know the gallantry of Moorish cavaliers, not to us, but to gentler hands, shall the keys of Granada be surrendered."

Thus saying, Ferdinand gave the keys to Isabel, who would have addressed some soothing flatteries to Boabdil. But the emotion and excitement were too much for her compassionate heart, heroine and queen though she was; and when she lifted her eyes upon the calm and pale features of the fallen monarch, the tears gushed from them irresistibly, and her voice died in murmurs. A faint flush overspread the features of Boabdil, and there was a momentary pause of embarrassment which the Moor was the first to break.

"Fair queen," said he, with mournful and pathetic dignity, "thou canst read the heart that thy generous sympathy touches and subdues: this is thy last, nor least glorious, conquest. But I detain you; let not my aspect cloud your triumph. Suffer me to say farewell."

"May we not hint at the blessed possibility of conversion?" whispered the pious queen through her tears to her royal consort.

"Not now, not now, by Saint Iago!" returned Ferdinand, quickly, and in the same tone, willing himself to conclude a painful conference. He then added aloud: "Go, my brother, and fair fortune with you! Forget the past."

Boabdil smiled bitterly, saluted the royal pair with profound and silent reverence, and rode slowly on, leaving the army below, as he ascended the path that led to his new principality beyond the Alpuxarras. As the trees snatched the Moorish cavalcade from the view of the king, Ferdinand ordered the army to recommence its march; and trumpet and cymbal presently sent their music to the ear of the Moslems.

Boabdil spurred on at full speed till his panting charger halted at the little village where his mother, his slaves, and his faithful Amine (sent on before) awaited him. Joining these, he proceeded without delay upon his melancholy path.

They ascended that eminence which is the pass into the Alpuxarras. From its height, the vale, the rivers, the spires, the towers of Granada broke gloriously upon the view of the little band. They halted mechanically and abruptly; every eye was turned to the beloved scene. The proud shame of baffled warriors, the tender memories of home, of childhood, of fatherland, swelled every heart and gushed from every eye. Suddenly the distant boom of artillery broke from the citadel, and rolled along the sunlit valley and crystal river. A universal wail burst from the exiles; it smote, it overpowered the heart of the ill-starred king, in vain seeking to wrap himself in Eastern pride or Stoical philosophy. The tears gushed from his eyes, and he covered his face with his hands.

Then said his haughty mother, gazing at him with hard and disdainful eyes, in that unjust and memorable reproach which

history has preserved: "Ay, weep like a woman over what thou couldst not defend like a man!"

Boabdil raised his countenance with indignant majesty, when he felt his hand tenderly clasped, and, turning round, saw Amine by his side.

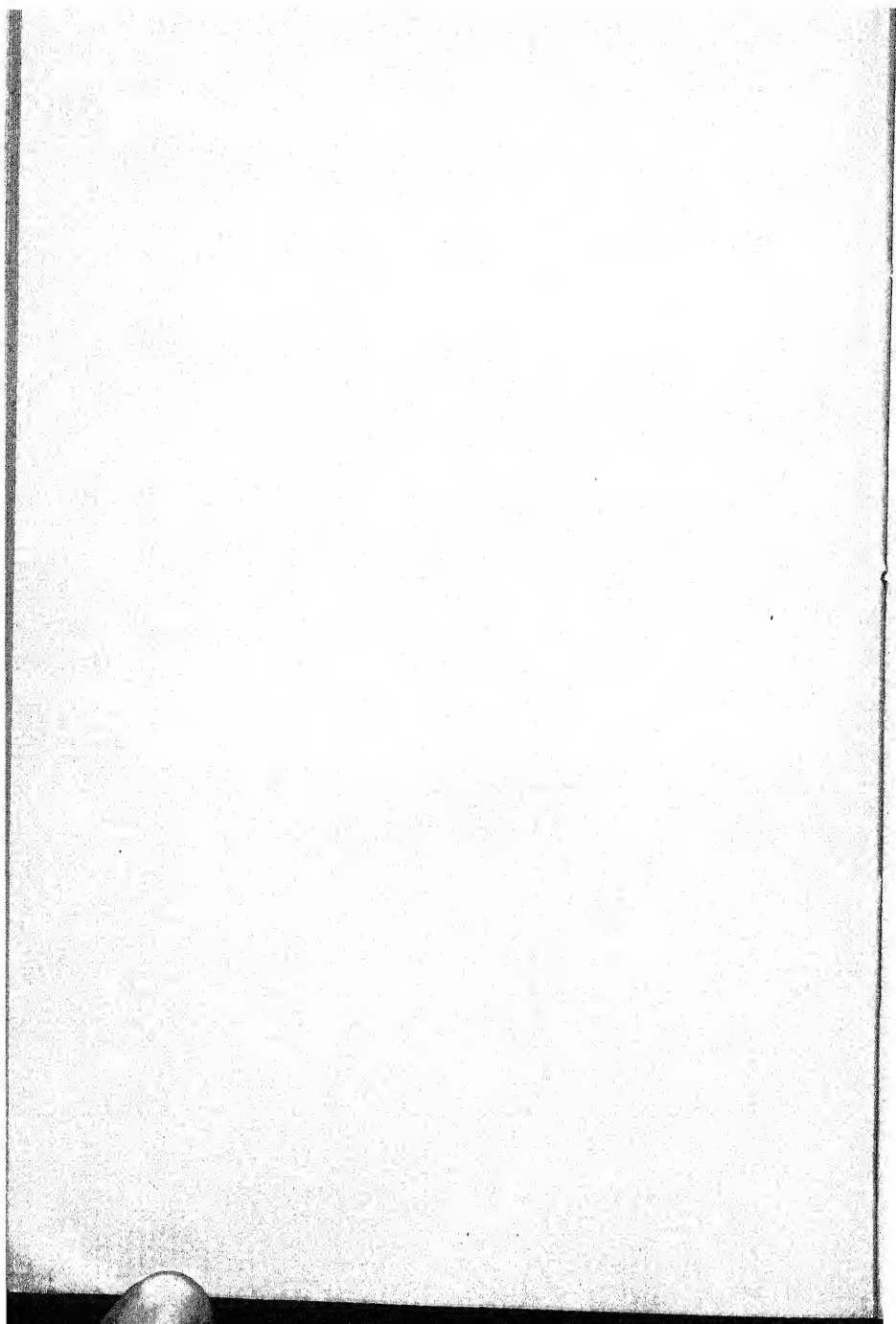
"Heed her not, heed her not, Boabdil!" said the slave; "never didst thou seem to me more noble than in that sorrow. Thou wert a hero for thy throne, but feel still, O light of mine eyes, a woman for thy people!"

"God is great," said Boabdil, "and God comforts me still! Thy lips, which never flattered me in my power, have no reproach for me in my affliction!"

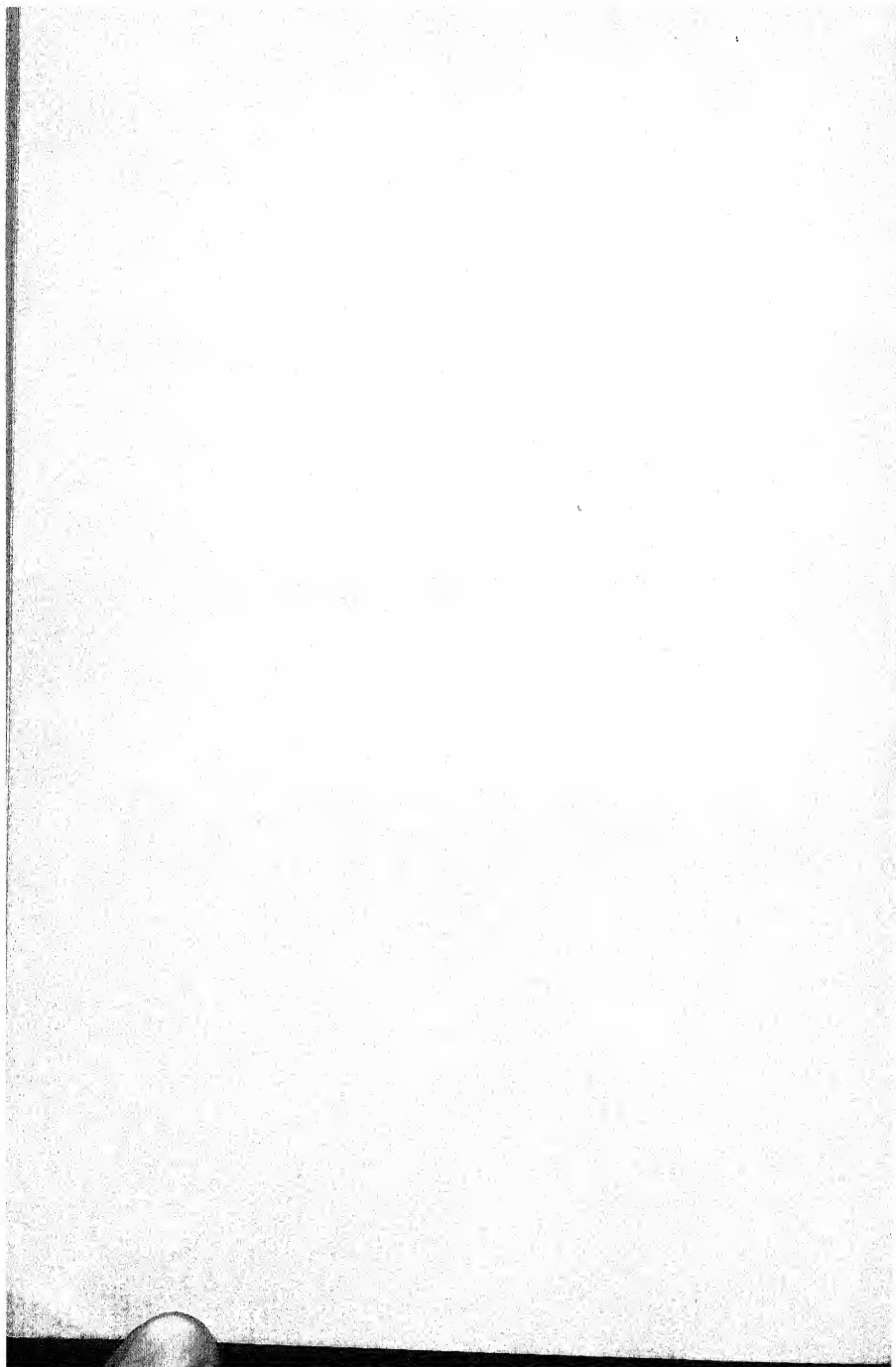
He said, and smiled upon Amine: it was *her* hour of triumph.

The band wound slowly on through the solitary defiles; and that place where the king wept, and the woman soothed, is still called "El ultimo suspiro del Moro,"—THE LAST SIGH OF THE MOOR!

THE END.



PAUSANIAS THE SPARTAN.



Dedication.

TO

THE REV. BENJAMIN HALL KENNEDY, D.D.,

CANON OF ELY,

AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF CAMBRIDGE.

MY DEAR DR. KENNEDY, — Revised by your helpful hand, and corrected by your accurate scholarship, to whom may these pages be so fitly inscribed as to that one of their author's earliest and most honoured friends¹ whose generous assistance has enabled me to place them before the public in their present form?

It is fully fifteen, if not twenty, years since my father commenced the composition of an historical romance on the subject of Pausanias, the Spartan Regent. Circumstances, which need not here be recorded, compelled him to lay aside the work thus begun. But the subject continued to haunt his imagination and occupy his thoughts. He detected in it singular opportunities for effective exercise of the gifts most peculiar to his genius, and repeatedly, in the intervals of other literary labour, he returned to the task which, though again and again interrupted, was never abandoned. To that rare combination of the imaginative and practical faculties which characterized

¹ The late Lord Lytton, in his unpublished autobiographical memoirs, describing his contemporaries at Cambridge, speaks of Dr. Kennedy as "a young giant of learning." — L.

my father's intellect, and received from his life such varied illustration, the story of Pausanias, indeed, briefly as it is told by Thucydides and Plutarch, addressed itself with singular force. The vast conspiracy of the Spartan Regent, had it been successful, would have changed the whole course of Grecian history. To any student of political phenomena, but more especially to one who, during the greater part of his life, had been personally engaged in active politics, the story of such a conspiracy could not fail to be attractive. To the student of human nature the character of Pausanias himself offers sources of the deepest interest; and in the strange career and tragic fate of the great conspirator, an imagination fascinated by the supernatural must have recognized remarkable elements of awe and terror. A few months previous to his death, I asked my father whether he had abandoned all intention of finishing his romance of "Pausanias." He replied, "On the contrary, I am finishing it now," and entered, with great animation, into a discussion of the subject and its capabilities. This reply to my inquiry surprised and impressed me; for, as you are aware, my father was then engaged in the simultaneous composition of two other and very different works,— "Kenelm Chillingly" and "The Parisians." It was the last time he ever spoke to me about "Pausanias;" but from what he then said of it I derived an impression that the book was all but completed, and needing only a few finishing touches to be ready for publication at no distant date.

This impression was confirmed, subsequent to my father's death, by a letter of instructions about his posthumous papers which accompanied his will. In that letter, dated 1856, special allusion is made to "Pausanias" as a work already far advanced towards its conclusion.

You, to whom, in your kind and careful revision of it,

this unfinished work has suggested many questions — which, alas! I cannot answer — as to the probable conduct and fate of its fictitious characters, will readily understand my reluctance to surrender an impression seemingly so well justified. I did not indeed cease to cherish it until reiterated and exhaustive search had failed to recover from the “wallet” wherein Time “puts alms for oblivion,” more than those few imperfect fragments which, by your valued help, are here arranged in such order as to carry on the narrative of “Pausanias,” with no solution of continuity, to the middle of the second volume.

There the manuscript breaks off. Was it ever continued farther? I know not. Many circumstances induce me to believe that the conception had long been carefully completed in the mind of its author; but he has left behind him only a very meagre and imperfect indication of the course which, beyond the point where it is broken, his narrative was intended to follow. In the presence of this fact, I have had to choose between the total suppression of the fragment, and the publication of it in its present form. My choice has not been made without hesitation; but I trust that, from many points of view, the following pages will be found to justify it.

Judiciously (as I cannot but think) for the purposes of his fiction, my father has taken up the story of Pausanias at a period subsequent to the battle of Plataea, when the Spartan Regent, as admiral of the United Greek fleet in the waters of Byzantium, was at the summit of his power and reputation. Mr. Grote in his great work expresses the opinion (which certainly cannot be disputed by unbiased readers of Thucydides) that the victory of Plataea was not attributable to any remarkable abilities on the part of Pausanias; but Mr. Grote fairly recognizes as quite exceptional the fame and authority accorded to Pausanias

after the battle by all the Hellenic States, the influence which his name commanded, and the awe which his character inspired. Not to the mere fact of his birth as a Heracleid, not to the lucky accident (if such it were) of his success at Plataea, and certainly not to his undisputed (but surely by no means uncommon) physical courage, is it possible to attribute the peculiar position which this remarkable man so long occupied in the estimation of his contemporaries. For the little that we know about Pausanias we are mainly dependent upon Athenian writers, who must have been strongly prejudiced against him. Mr. Grote, adopting (as any modern historian needs must do) the narrative so handed down to him, never once pauses to question its estimate of the character of a man who was at one time the glory, and at another the terror, of all Greece. Yet in comparing the summary proceedings taken against Leotychides with the extreme, and seemingly pusillanimous, deference paid to Pausanias by the ephors long after they possessed the most alarming proofs of his treason, Mr. Grote observes, without attempting to account for the fact, that Pausanias, though only regent, was far more powerful than any Spartan king. Why so powerful? Obviously, because he possessed uncommon force of character,—a force of character strikingly attested by every known incident of his career, and which, when concentrated upon the conception and execution of vast designs (even if those designs be criminal), must be recognized as the special attribute of genius. Thucydides, Plutarch, Diodorus, Grote, all these writers ascribe solely to the administrative incapacity of Pausanias that offensive arrogance which characterized his command at Byzantium, and apparently cost Sparta the loss of her maritime hegemony. But here is precisely one of those problems in public policy and personal conduct which the historian bequeaths to the imaginative writer, and which

needs, for its solution, a profound knowledge rather of human nature than of books. For dealing with such a problem my father, in addition to the intuitive penetration of character and motive which is common to every great romance writer, certainly possessed two qualifications special to himself,—the habit of dealing *practically* with political questions, and experience in the active management of men. His explanation of the policy of Pausanias at Byzantium, if it be not (as I think it is) the right one, is at least the only one yet offered. I venture to think that, historically, it merits attention, as, from the imaginative point of view, it is undoubtedly felicitous. By elevating our estimate of Pausanias as a statesman, it increases our interest in him as a man.

The author of "Pausanias" does not merely tell us that his hero, when in conference with the Spartan commissioners, displayed "great natural powers which, rightly trained, might have made him not less renowned in council than in war," but he gives us, though briefly, the arguments used by Pausanias. He presents to us the image, always interesting, of a man who grasps firmly the clear conception of a definite but difficult policy, for success in which he is dependent on the conscious or involuntary co-operation of men impenetrable to that conception, and possessed of a collective authority even greater than his own. To retain Sparta temporarily at the head of Greece was an ambition quite consistent with the more criminal designs of Pausanias; and his whole conduct at Byzantium is rendered more intelligible than it appears in history, when he points out that "for Sparta to maintain her ascendancy two things are needful,—first, to continue the war by land; secondly, to disgust the Ionians with their sojourn at Byzantium, to send them with their ships back to their own havens, and so leave Hellas under the sole guardianship of the Spartans and

their Peloponnesian allies." And who has not learned, in a later school, the wisdom of the Spartan commissioners? Do not their utterances sound familiar to us? "Increase of dominion is waste of life and treasure. Sparta is content to hold her own. What care we who leads the Greeks into blows? The fewer blows the better. Brave men fight if they must; wise men never fight if they can help it." Of this scene and some others in the first volume of the present fragment (notably the scene in which the Regent confronts the allied chiefs, and defends himself against the charge of connivance at the escape of the Persian prisoners), I should have been tempted to say that they could not have been written without personal experience of political life, if the interview between Wallenstein and the Swedish ambassadors in Schiller's great trilogy did not recur to my recollection as I write. The language of the ambassadors in that interview is a perfect manual of practical diplomacy; and yet in practical diplomacy Schiller had no personal experience. There are, indeed, no limits to the creative power of genius. But it is perhaps the practical politician who will be most interested by the chapters in which Pausanias explains his policy or defends his position.

In publishing a romance which its author has left unfinished, I may perhaps be allowed to indicate briefly what I believe to have been the general scope of its design, and the probable progress of its narrative.

The "domestic interest" of that narrative is supplied by the story of Cleonice,—a story which, briefly told by Plutarch, suggests one of the most tragic situations it is possible to conceive. The pathos and terror of this dark, weird episode in a life which history herself invests with all the character of romance, long haunted the imagination of Byron, and elicited from Goethe one of the most whimsical illustrations of the astonishing absurdity into

which criticism sometimes tumbles when it "o'erleaps itself and falls o' the other."

Writing of "Manfred" and its author, he says:—

"There are, properly speaking, two females whose phantoms forever haunt him, and which, in this piece also, perform principal parts, — one under the name of Astarte, the other without form or actual presence, and merely a voice. Of the horrid occurrence which took place with the former, the following is related: When a bold and enterprising young man, he won the affections of a Florentine lady. Her husband discovered the amour, and murdered his wife. But the murderer was the same night found dead in the street and there was no one to whom any suspicion could be attached. Lord Byron removed from Florence, and *these spirits haunted him all his life after*. This romantic incident is rendered highly probable by innumerable allusions to it in his poems. As, for instance, when turning his sad contemplations inwards, he applies to himself the fatal history of the king of Sparta. It is as follows: Pausanias, a Lacedæmonian general, acquires glory by the important victory at Plataea, but afterwards forfeits the confidence of his countrymen by his arrogance, obstinacy, and secret intrigues with the common enemy. This man draws upon himself the heavy guilt of innocent blood, which attends him to his end; for, while commanding the fleet of the allied Greeks in the Black Sea, he is inflamed with a violent passion for a Byzantine maiden. After long resistance, he at length obtains her from her parents, and she is to be delivered up to him at night. She modestly desires the servant to put out the lamp, and while groping her way in the dark, she overturns it. Pausanias is awakened from his sleep; apprehensive of an attack from murderers, he seizes his sword and destroys his mistress. The horrid sight never leaves him; her shade pursues him unceasingly; and in vain he implores aid of the gods and the exorcising priests. That poet must have a lacerated heart who selects such a scene from antiquity, appropriates it to himself, and burdens his tragic image with it."¹

It is extremely characteristic of Byron that, instead of resenting this charge of murder, he was so pleased by the criticism in which it occurs that he afterwards dedicated "The Deformed Transformed" to Goethe. Mr. Grote repeats the story above alluded to, with all the sanction of his grave authority, and even mentions the name of the

¹ Moore, *Life and Letters of Lord Byron*, p. 723.

young lady,—apparently for the sake of adding a few black strokes to his character of Pausanias. But the supernatural part of the legend was of course beneath the notice of a nineteenth-century critic, and he passes it by. This part of the story is, however, essential to the psychological interest of it; for whether it be that Pausanias supposed himself, or that contemporary gossips supposed him, to be haunted by the phantom of the woman he had loved and slain, the fact in either case affords a lurid glimpse into the inner life of the man,—just as, although Goethe's murder-story about Byron is ludicrously untrue, yet the fact that such a story was circulated, and could be seriously repeated by such a man as Goethe without being resented by Byron himself, offers significant illustration both of what Byron was and of what he appeared to his contemporaries. Grote also assigns the death of Cleonice to that period in the life of Pausanias when he was in the command of the allies at Byzantium, and refers to it as one of the numerous outrages whereby Pausanias abused and disgraced the authority confided to him. Plutarch, however, who tells the story in greater detail, distinctly fixes the date of its catastrophe subsequent to the return of the regent to Byzantium, as a solitary volunteer, in the trireme of Hermione. The following is his account of the affair:—

“It is related that Pausanias when at Byzantium sought, with criminal purpose, the love of a young lady of good family, named Cleonice. The parents, yielding to fear or necessity, suffered him to carry away their daughter. Before entering his chamber she requested that the light might be extinguished, and in darkness and silence she approached the couch of Pausanias, who was already asleep. In so doing she accidentally upset the lamp. Pausanias, suddenly aroused from slumber, and supposing that some enemy was about to assassinate him, seized his sword, which lay by his bedside, and with it struck the maiden to the ground. She died of her wound, and from that moment repose was banished from the life of Pausanias. A spectre appeared to him every

night in his sleep, and repeated to him in reproachful tones this hexameter verse, —

“ ‘Whither I wait thee march, and receive the doom thou deservest,
Sooner or later, but ever, to man crime bringeth disaster.’ ”

The allies, scandalized by this misdeed, concerted with Cimon, and besieged Pausanias in Byzantium. But he succeeded in escaping. Continually troubled by the phantom, he took refuge, it is said, at Heraclea in that temple where the souls of the dead are evoked. He appealed to Cleonice, and conjured her to mitigate his torment. She appeared to him, and told him that on his return to Sparta he would attain the end of his sufferings; indicating, as it would seem, by these enigmatic words, the death which there awaited him. This [adds Plutarch] is a story told by most of the historians.”¹

I feel no doubt that this version of the story, or at least the general outline of it, would have been followed by the romance had my father lived to complete it. Some modification of its details would doubtless have been necessary for the purposes of fiction. But that the Cleonice of the novel is destined to die by the hand of her lover, is clearly indicated. To me it seems that considerable skill and judgment are shown in the pains taken, at the very opening of the book, to prepare the mind of the reader for an incident which would have been intolerably painful, and must have prematurely ended the whole narrative interest, had the character of Cleonice been drawn otherwise than as we find it in this first portion of the book. From the outset she appears before us under the shadow of a tragic fatality. Of that fatality she is herself intuitively conscious, and with it her whole being is in harmony. No sooner do we recognize her real character than we perceive that for such a character there can be no fit or satisfactory issue from the difficulties of her position in any conceivable combination of earthly circumstances. But she is not of the earth earthly. Her thoughts already habitually hover on the dim frontier of some vague spirit-

¹ Plutarch, *Life of Cimon*.

ual region in which her love seeks refuge from the hopeless realities of her life; and recognizing this betimes, we are prepared to see above the hand of her ill-fated lover, when it strikes her down in the dark, the merciful and releasing hand of her natural destiny.

But assuming the author to have adopted Plutarch's chronology, and deferred the death of Cleonice till the return of Pausanias to Byzantium (the latest date to which he could possibly have deferred it), this catastrophe must still have occurred somewhere in the course, or at the close, of his second volume. There would, in that case, have still remained about nine years (and those the most eventful) of his hero's career to be narrated. The premature removal of the heroine from the narrative so early in the course of it would therefore, at first sight, appear to be a serious defect in the conception of this romance. Here it is, however, that the credulous gossip of the old biographer comes to the rescue of the modern artist. I apprehend that the Cleonice of the novel would, after her death, have been still sensibly present to the reader's imagination throughout the rest of the romance. She would then have moved through it like a fate, reappearing in the most solemn moments of the story, and at all times apparent, even when unseen, in her visible influence upon the fierce and passionate character, the sombre and turbulent career, of her guilty lover. In short, we may fairly suppose that in all the closing scenes of the tragedy, Cleonice would have still figured and acted as one of those supernatural agencies which my father, following the example of his great predecessor, Scott, did not scruple to introduce into the composition of historical romance.¹

Without the explanation here suggested, those metaphysical conversations between Cleonice, Aleman, and Pausanias, which occupy the opening chapters of Book

¹ Harold.

II., might be deemed superfluous. But, in fact, they are essential to the preparation of the catastrophe; and that catastrophe, if reached, would undoubtedly have revealed to any reflective reader their important connection with the narrative which they now appear to retard somewhat unduly.

Quite apart from the unfinished manuscript of this story of Pausanias, and in another portion of my father's papers which have no reference to this story, I have discovered the following, undated, memorandum of the destined contents of the second and third volumes of the work:—

PAUSANIAS.

VOL. II.

Lysander.—Sparta.—Ephors.—Decision to recall Pausanias. 60.

Pausanias with Pharnabazes.—On the point of success.—Xerxes' daughter.
—Interview with Cleonice.—Recalled. 60.

Sparta.—Alcman with his family. 60.

Cleonice.—Antagoras.—Yields to suit of marriage. 60.

Pausanias suddenly reappears as a volunteer.—Scenes. 60.

VOL. III.

Pausanias removes Cleonice, etc.—Conspiracy against him.—Up to Cleonice's death. 100.

His expulsion from Byzantium.—His despair.—His journey into Thrace.
—Scythians, etc. ?

Heraclea.—Ghost. 60.

His return, — to Colona. ?

Antagoras resolved on revenge.—Communicates with Sparta. ?

The . . . Conference with Alcman.—Pausanias depends on Helots and money. 40.

His return, — to death. 120.

This is the only indication I can find of the intended conclusion of the story. Meagre though it be, however, it sufficiently suggests the manner in which the author of the romance intended to deal with the circumstances of Cleonice's death as related by Plutarch. With her forcible removal by Pausanias, or her willing flight with him from the house of her father, it would probably have been difficult to reconcile the general sentiment of the romance, in connection with any circumstances less conceivable than those which are indicated in the memorandum. But in such circumstances the step taken by Pausanias might have had no worse motive than the rescue of the woman who loved him from forced union with another; and Cleonice's assent to that step might have been quite compatible with the purity and heroism of her character. In this manner, moreover, a strong motive is prepared for that sentiment of revenge on the part of Antagoras, whereby the dramatic interest of the story might be greatly heightened in the subsequent chapters. The intended introduction of the supernatural element is also clearly indicated. But apart from this, fine opportunities for psychological analysis would doubtless have occurred in tracing the gradual deterioration of such a character as that of Pausanias when, deprived of the guardian influence of a hope passionate but not impure, its craving for fierce excitement must have been stimulated by remorseful memories and impotent despairs. Indeed, the imperfect manuscript now printed contains only the exposition of a tragedy. All the most striking effects, all the strongest dramatic situations, have been reserved for the pages of the manuscript which, alas! are either lost or unwritten.

Who can doubt, for instance, how effectually in the closing scenes of this tragedy the grim image of Alitheia might have assumed the place assigned to it by history? All that we now see is the preparation made for its effec-

tive presentation in the foreground of such later scenes, by the chapter in the second volume describing the meeting between Lysander and the stern mother of his Spartan chief. In Lysander himself, moreover, we have the germ of a singularly dramatic situation. How would Lysander act in the final struggle which his character and fate are already preparing for him, between patriotism and friendship, his fidelity to Pausanias, and his devotion to Sparta? Is Lysander's father intended for that ephor, who, in the last moment, made the sign that warned Pausanias to take refuge in the temple which became his living tomb? Probably. Would Themistocles, who was so seriously compromised in the conspiracy of Pausanias, have appeared and played a part in those scenes on which the curtain must remain unlifted? Possibly. Is Alcman the Helot who revealed to the ephors the gigantic plots of his master just when those plots were on the eve of execution? There is much in the relations between Pausanias and the Mothon, as they are described in the opening chapters of the romance, which favours, and indeed renders almost irresistible, such a supposition. But then, on the other hand, what genius on the part of the author could reconcile us to the perpetration by his hero of a crime so mean, so cowardly, as that personal perfidy to which history ascribes the revelation of the regent's far more excusable treasons, and their terrible punishment?

These questions must remain unanswered. The magician can wave his wand no more. The circle is broken, the spells are scattered, the secret lost. The images which he evoked, and which he alone could animate, remain before us incomplete, semi-articulate, unable to satisfy the curiosity they inspire. A group of fragments, in many places broken, you have helped me to restore. With what reverent and kindly care, with what disciplined judgment and felicitous suggestion, you have ac-

complished the difficult task so generously undertaken, let me here most gratefully attest. Beneath the sculptor's name, allow me to inscribe upon the pedestal your own; and accept this sincere assurance of the inherited esteem and personal regard with which I am, my dear Dr. Kennedy,

Your obliged and faithful

LYTTON.

CINTRA, 5 *July*, 1875.

PAUSANIAS THE SPARTAN.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

ON one of the quays which bordered the unrivalled harbour of Byzantium, more than twenty-three centuries before the date at which this narrative is begun, stood two Athenians. In the waters of the haven rode the vessels of the Grecian fleet. So deep was the basin, in which the tides are scarcely felt,¹ that the prows of some of the ships touched the quays, and the setting sun glittered upon the smooth and waxen surfaces of the prows rich with diversified colours and wrought gilding. To the extreme right of the fleet, and nearly opposite the place upon which the Athenians stood, was a vessel still more profusely ornamented than the rest. On the prow were elaborately carved the heads of the twin deities of the Laconian mariner, Castor and Pollux; in the centre of the deck was a wooden edifice or pavilion, having a gilded roof and shaded by purple awnings, — an imitation of the luxurious galleys of the Barbarian; while the *parasemon*, or flag, as it idly waved in the faint breeze of the gentle evening, exhibited the terrible serpent which, if it was the fabulous type of demigods and heroes, might also be regarded as an emblem of the wily but stern policy of the Spartan State. Such was the galley of the commander of the armament which (after the reduction of Cyprus) had but lately wrested from the yoke of Persia that link between her European and Asiatic

¹ Gibbon, c. 17.

domains, that key of the Bosphorus, "the Golden Horn" of Byzantium.¹

High above all other Greeks (Themistocles alone excepted) soared the fame of that renowned chief, Pausanias, regent of Sparta and general of the allied troops at the victorious battle-field of Plataea. The spot on which the Athenians stood was lonely and now unoccupied, save by themselves and the sentries stationed at some distance on either hand. The larger proportion of the crews in the various vessels were on shore; but on the decks idly reclined small groups of sailors, and the murmur of their voices stole, indistinguishably blended, upon the translucent air. Behind rose, one above the other, the Seven Hills, on which long afterwards the Emperor Constantine built a second Rome; and over these heights, even then, buildings were scattered of various forms and dates, — here the pillared temples of the Greek colonists, to whom Byzantium owed its origin; there the light roofs and painted domes which the Eastern conquerors had introduced.

One of the Athenians was a man in the meridian of manhood, of a calm, sedate, but somewhat haughty aspect; the other was in the full bloom of youth, of lofty stature, and with a certain majesty of bearing; down his shoulders flowed a profusion of long curled hair,² divided in the centre of the forehead, and connected with golden clasps, in which was wrought the emblem of the Athenian nobles, the Grasshopper, — a fashion not yet obsolete, as it had become in the days of Thucydides. Still, to an observer there was something heavy in the ordinary expression of the handsome countenance. His dress differed from the earlier fashion of the Ionians; it dispensed with those loose linen garments which had something of effeminacy in their folds, and was confined to the simple and statue-like grace that characterized the

¹ The harbour of Constantinople, which may be considered as an arm of the Bosphorus, obtained in a very remote period the denomination of the Golden Horn. The curve which it describes might be compared to the horn of a stag, or, as it should seem, with more propriety to that of an ox. — Gibbon, c. 17; Strabo, l. x.

² Ion, *apud* Plutarch.

Dorian garb. Yet the clasp that fastened the chlamys upon the right shoulder, leaving the arm free, was of pure gold and exquisite workmanship, and the materials of the simple vest-ure were of a quality that betokened wealth and rank in the wearer.

"Yes, Cimon," said the elder of the Athenians, "yonder galley itself affords sufficient testimony of the change that has come over the haughty Spartan. It is difficult, indeed, to recognize in this luxurious satrap, who affects the dress, the manners, the very insolence of the Barbarian, that Pausanias who, after the glorious day of Plataea, ordered the slaves to prepare in the tent of Mardonius such a banquet as would have been served to the Persian, while his own Spartan broth and bread were set beside it, in order that he might utter to the chiefs of Greece that noble pleasantry, 'Behold the folly of the Persians, who forsook such splendour to plunder such poverty.'"¹

"Shame upon his degeneracy, and thrice shame!" said the young Cimon, sternly. "I love the Spartans so well that I blush for whatever degrades them. And all Sparta is dwarfed by the effeminacy of her chief."

"Softly, Cimon," said Aristides, with a sober smile. "Whatever surprise we may feel at the corruption of Pausanias, he is not one who will allow us to feel contempt. Through all the voluptuous softness acquired by intercourse with these Barbarians, the strong nature of the descendant of the demigod still breaks forth. Even at the distaff I recognize Alcides, whether for evil or for good. Pausanias is one on whom our most anxious gaze must be duly bent. But in this change of his I rejoice; the gods are at work for Athens. See you not that, day after day, while Pausanias disgusts the allies with the Spartans themselves, he throws them more and more into the arms of Athens? Let his madness go on, and ere long the violet-crowned city will become the queen of the seas."

"Such was my own hope," said Cimon, his face assuming a new expression, brightened with all the intelligence of ambi-

¹ Herodotus, ix. 82.

tion and pride; "but I did not dare own it to myself till you spoke. Several officers of Ionia and the Isles have already openly and loudly proclaimed to me their wish to exchange the Spartan ascendancy for the Athenian."

"And with all your love for Sparta," said Aristides, looking steadfastly and searchingly at his comrade, "you would not then hesitate to rob her of a glory which you might bestow on your own Athens?"

"Ah, am I not Athenian?" answered Cimon, with a deep passion in his voice. "Though my great father perished a victim to the injustice of a faction; though he who had saved Athens from the Mede died in the Athenian dungeon, — still, fatherless, I see in Athens but a mother, and if her voice sounded harshly in my boyish years, in manhood I have feasted on her smiles. Yes, I honour Sparta, but I love Athens. You have my answer."

"You speak well," said Aristides, with warmth; "you are worthy of the destinies for which I foresee that the son of Miltiades is reserved. Be wary, be cautious; above all, be smooth, and blend with men of every state and grade. I would wish that the allies themselves should draw the contrast between the insolence of the Spartan chief and the courtesy of the Athenians. What said you to the Ionian officers?"

"I said that Athens held there was no difference between to command and to obey, except so far as was best for the interests of Greece; that as on the field of Plataea, when the Tegeans asserted precedence over the Athenians, we, the Athenian army, at once exclaimed, through your voice, Aristides, 'We come here to fight the Barbarian, not to dispute amongst ourselves; place us where you will,'¹ — even so now, while the allies give the command to Sparta, Sparta we will obey. But if we were thought by the Grecian States the fittest leaders, our answer would be the same that we gave at Plataea, 'Not we, but Greece be consulted; place us where you will!'"

"Oh, wise Cimon," exclaimed Aristides, "I have no cau-

¹ Plutarch in Vita Aristides.

tion to bestow on you. You do by intuition that which I attempt by experience. But hark! What music sounds in the distance,—the airs that Lydia borrowed from the East?"

"And for which," said Cimon, sarcastically, "Pausanias hath abandoned the Dorian flute."

Soft, airy, and voluptuous were indeed the sounds which now, from the streets leading upwards from the quay, floated along the delicious air. The sailors rose, listening and eager, from the decks; there was once more bustle, life, and animation on board the fleet. From several of the vessels the trumpets woke a sonorous signal-note. In a few minutes the quays, before so deserted, swarmed with the Grecian mariners, who emerged hastily, whether from various houses in the haven, or from the encampment which stretched along it, and hurried to their respective ships. On board the galley of Pausanias there was more especial animation; not only mariners, but slaves, evidently from the Eastern markets, were seen jostling each other, and heard talking quick and loud in foreign tongues. Rich carpets were unfurled and laid across the deck, while trembling and hasty hands smoothed into yet more graceful folds the curtains that shaded the gay pavilion in the centre. The Athenians looked on, the one with thoughtful composure, the other with a bitter smile, while these preparations announced the unexpected and not undreaded approach of the great Pausanias.

"Ho, noble Cimon!" cried a young man, who, hurrying towards one of the vessels, caught sight of the Athenians and paused. "You are the very person whom I most desired to see. Aristides too!—we are fortunate."

The speaker was a young man of slighter make and lower stature than the Athenians, but well shaped, and with features the partial effeminacy of which was elevated by an expression of great vivacity and intelligence. The steed trained for Elis never bore in its proportions the evidence of blood and rare breeding more visibly than the dark, brilliant eye of this young man; his broad, low, transparent brow, expanded nostril, and sensitive lip revealed the pas-

sionate and somewhat arrogant character of the vivacious Greek of the Ægean Isles.

"Antagoras," replied Cimon, laying his hand with frank and somewhat blunt cordiality on the Greek's shoulder, "like the grape of your own Chios, you cannot fail to be welcome at all times. But why would you seek us now?"

"Because I will no longer endure the insolence of this rude Spartan. Will you believe it, Cimon, — will you believe it, Aristides? Pausanias has actually dared to sentence to blows, to stripes, one of my own men, — a free Chian; nay, a decadarchus.¹ I have but this instant heard it. And the offence — Gods, the *offence!* — was that he ventured to contest with a Laconian, an underling in the Spartan army, which one of the two had the fair right to a wine cask! Shall this be borne, Cimon?"

"Stripes to a Greek!" said Cimon, and the colour mounted to his brow. "Thinks Pausanias that the Ionian race are already his Helots?"

"Be calm," said Aristides; "Pausanias approaches. I will accost him."

"But listen still," exclaimed Antagoras eagerly, plucking the gown of the Athenian as the latter turned away. "When Pausanias heard of the contest between my soldier and his Laconian, what said he, think you? 'Prior claim: learn henceforth that where the Spartans are to be found, the Spartans in all matters have the prior claim.'"

"We will see to it," returned Aristides, calmly; "but keep by my side."

And now the music sounded loud and near, and suddenly, as the procession approached, the character of that music altered. The Lydian measures ceased, those who had attuned them gave way to musicians of loftier aspect and simpler garb, — in whom might be recognized, not, indeed, the genuine Spartans, but their free, if subordinate, countrymen of Laconia, — and a minstrel who walked beside them broke out into a song, partially adapted from the bold and lively strain of Alcæus, the first two lines in each stanza ringing

¹ Leader of ten men.

much to that chime, the two latter reduced into briefer compass, as, with allowance for the differing laws of national rhythm, we thus seek to render the verse:—

SONG.

Multitudes, backward! Way for the Dorian;
Way for the Lord of rocky Laconia!
Heaven to Hercules opened;
Way on the earth for his son.

Steel and fate, blunted, break on his fortitude;
Two evils only never endureth he,—
Death by a wound in retreating,
Life with a blot on his name.

Rocky his birthplace: rocks are immutable;
So are his laws, and so shall his glory be.
Time is the Victor of Nations,
Sparta the Victor of Time.

Watch o'er him heedful on the wide ocean,
Brothers of Helen, luminous, guiding stars;
Dangerous to Truth are the fickle,
Dangerous to Sparta the seas.

Multitudes, backward! Way for the Conqueror;
Way for the footstep half the world fled before;
Nothing that Phœbus can shine on
Needs so much space as Renown.

Behind the musicians came ten Spartans, selected from the celebrated three hundred who claimed the right to be stationed around the king in battle. Tall, stalwart, sheathed in armour, their shields slung at their backs, their crests of plumage or horsehair waving over their strong and stern features, these hardy warriors betrayed to the keen eye of Aristides their sullen discontent at the part assigned to them in the luxurious procession; their brows were knit, their lips contracted, and each of them who caught the glance of the Athenians, turned his eyes, as half in shame, half in anger, to the ground.

Coming now upon the quay opposite to the galley of Pausanias, from which was suspended a ladder of silken

cords, the procession halted, and opening on either side, left space in the midst for the commander.

"He comes," whispered Antagoras to Cimon. "By Hercules! I pray you survey him well. Is it the conqueror of Mardonius, or the ghost of Mardonius himself?"

The question of the Chian seemed not extravagant to the blunt son of Miltiades as his eyes now rested on Pausanias.

The pure Spartan race boasted perhaps the most superb models of masculine beauty which the land blessed by Apollo could afford. The laws that regulated marriage ensured a healthful and vigorous progeny. Gymnastic discipline from early boyhood gave ease to the limbs, iron to the muscle, grace to the whole frame. Every Spartan, being born to command, being noble by his birth, lord of the Laconians, master of the Helots, superior in the eyes of Greece to all other Greeks, was at once a Republican and an Aristocrat. Schooled in the arts that compose the presence, and give calmness and majesty to the bearing, he combined with the mere physical advantages of activity and strength a conscious and yet natural dignity of mien. Amidst the Greeks assembled at the Olympian contests, others showed richer garments, more sumptuous chariots, rarer steeds; but no State could vie with Sparta in the thews and sinews, the aspect and the majesty, of the men. Nor were the royal race, the descendants of Hercules, in external appearance unworthy of their countrymen and of their fabled origin.

Sculptor and painter would have vainly tasked their imaginative minds to invent a nobler ideal for the effigies of a hero than that which the victor of Plataea offered to their inspiration. As he now paused amidst the group, he towered high above them all, even above Cimon himself. But in his stature there was nothing of the cumbrous bulk and stolid heaviness which often destroy the beauty of vast strength. Severe and early training, long habits of rigid abstemiousness, the toils of war, and, more than all, perhaps, the constant play of a restless, anxious, aspiring temper, had left, undisfigured by superfluous flesh, the grand proportions of a frame, the very spareness of which had at once the strength and the beauty of

one of those hardy victors in the wrestling or boxing match, whose agility and force are modelled by discipline to the purest forms of grace. Without that exact and chiselled harmony of countenance which characterized perhaps the Ionic rather than the Doric race, the features of the royal Spartan were noble and commanding. His complexion was sunburned almost to Oriental swarthiness, and the raven's plume had no darker gloss than that of his long hair, which (contrary to the Spartan custom), flowing on either side, mingled with the closer curls of the beard. To a scrutinizing gaze, the more dignified and prepossessing effect of this exterior would perhaps have been counterbalanced by an eye, bright indeed and penetrating, but restless and suspicious, by a certain ineffable mixture of arrogant pride and profound melancholy in the general expression of the countenance, ill according with that frank and serene aspect which best becomes the face of one who would lead mankind. About him altogether—the countenance, the form, the bearing—there was that which woke a vague, profound, and singular interest,—an interest somewhat mingled with awe, but not altogether uncalculated to produce that affection which belongs to admiration, save when the sudden frown or disdainful lip repelled the gentler impulse and tended rather to excite fear, or to irritate pride, or to wound self-love.

But if the form and features of Pausanias were eminently those of the purest race of Greece, the dress which he assumed was no less characteristic of the Barbarian. He wore, not the garb of the noble Persian race, which, close and simple, was but little less manly than that of the Greeks, but the flowing and gorgeous garments of the Mede. His long gown, which swept the earth, was covered with flowers wrought in golden tissue. Instead of the Spartan hat, the high Median cap or tiara crowned his perfumed and lustrous hair, while (what of all was most hateful to Grecian eyes) he wore, though otherwise unarmed, the curved cimeter and short dirk that were the national weapons of the Barbarian. And as it was not customary, nor indeed legitimate, for the Greeks to wear weapons on peaceful occasions and with their ordinary cos-

tume, so this departure from the common practice had not only in itself something offensive to the jealous eyes of his comrades, but was rendered yet more obnoxious by the adoption of the very arms of the East.

By the side of Pausanias was a man whose dark beard was already sown with gray. This man, named Gongylus, though a Greek, — a native of Eretria, in Eubœa, — was in high command under the great Persian king. At the time of the Barbarian invasion under Datis and Artaphernes he had deserted the cause of Greece, and had been rewarded with the lordship of four towns in Æolis. Few among the apostate Greeks were more deeply instructed in the language and manners of the Persians; and the intimate and sudden friendship that had grown up between him and the Spartan was regarded by the Greeks with the most bitter and angry suspicion. As if to show his contempt for the natural jealousy of his countrymen, Pausanias, however, had just given to the Eretrian the government of Byzantium itself, and with the command of the citadel had intrusted to him the custody of the Persian prisoners captured in that port. Among these were men of the highest rank and influence at the court of Xerxes; and it was more than rumoured that of late Pausanias had visited and conferred with them, through the interpretation of Gongylus, far more frequently than became the general of the Greeks. Gongylus had one of those countenances which are observed when many of more striking semblance are overlooked; but the features were sharp and the visage lean, the eyes vivid and sparkling as those of the lynx, and the dark pupil seemed yet more dark from the extreme whiteness of the ball, from which it lessened or dilated with the impulse of the spirit which gave it fire. There was in that eye all the subtle craft, the plotting and restless malignity, which usually characterized those Greek renegades who prostituted their native energies to the rich service of the Barbarian; and the lips, narrow and thin, wore that everlasting smile which to the credulous disguises wile, and to the experienced betrays it. Small, spare, and prematurely bent, the Eretrian supported himself by a staff, upon which now leaning, he glanced, quickly and

pryingly, around, till his eyes rested upon the Athenians, with the young Chian standing in their rear.

"The Athenian captains are here to do you homage, Pausanias," said he in a whisper, as he touched with his small, lean fingers the arm of the Spartan.

Pausanias turned and muttered to himself, and at that instant Aristides approached.

"If it please you, Pausanias, Cimon and myself, the leaders of the Athenians, would crave a hearing upon certain matters."

"Son of Lysimachus, say on."

"Your pardon, Pausanias," returned the Athenian, lowering his voice, and with a smile: "this is too crowded a council-hall. May we attend you on board your galley?"

"Not so," answered the Spartan, haughtily: "the morning to affairs, the evening to recreation. We shall sail in the bay to see the moon rise; and if we indulge in consultations, it will be over our wine-cups. It is a good custom."

"It is a Persian one," said Cimon, bluntly.

"It is permitted to us," returned the Spartan, coldly, "to borrow from those we conquer. But enough of this. I have no secrets with the Athenians. No matter if the whole city hear what you would address to Pausanias."

"It is to complain," said Aristides, with calm emphasis, but still in an undertone.

"Ay, I doubt it not; the Athenians are eloquent in grumbling."

"It was not found so at Plateæ," returned Cimon.

"Son of Miltiades," said Pausanias, loftily, "your wit outruns your experience. But my time is short. To the matter!"

"If you will have it so, I will speak," said Aristides, raising his voice. "Before your own Spartans, our comrades in arms, I proclaim our causes of complaint. Firstly, then, I demand release and compensation to seven Athenians, free-born and citizens, whom your orders have condemned to the unworthy punishment of standing all day in the open sun with the weight of iron anchors on their shoulders."

"The mutinous knaves!" exclaimed the Spartan. "They introduced into the camp the insolence of their own agora, and

were publicly heard in the streets inveighing against myself as a favourer of the Persians."

"It was easy to confute the charge; it was tyrannical to punish words in men whose deeds had raised you to the command of Greece."

"*Their* deeds! Ye Gods, give me patience! By the help of Juno the Protectress it was this brain and this arm that — But I will not justify myself by imitating the Athenian fashion of wordy boasting. Pass on to your next complaint."

"You have placed slaves — yes, Helots — around the springs, to drive away with scourges the soldiers that come for water."

"Not so, but merely to prevent others from filling their vases until the Spartans are supplied."

"And by what right —" began Cimon; but Aristides checked him with a gesture, and proceeded.

"That precedence is not warranted by custom, nor by the terms of our alliance; and the springs, O Pausanias, are bounteous enough to provide for all. I proceed. You have formally sentenced citizens and soldiers to the scourge. Nay, this very day, you have extended the sentence to one in actual command amongst the Chians. Is it not so, Antagoras?"

"It is," said the young Chian, coming forward boldly; "and in the name of my countrymen I demand justice."

"And I also, Uliades of Samos," said a thickset and burly Greek who had joined the group unobserved, — "*I* demand justice. What, by the Gods! Are we to be all equals in the day of battle, — 'My good sir, march here;' and 'My dear sir, just run into that breach,' — and yet when we have won the victory and should share the glory, is one State, nay, one man, to seize the whole, and deal out iron anchors and tough cowhides to his companions? No, Spartans, this is not your view of the case; you suffer in the eyes of Greece by this misconduct. To Sparta itself I appeal."

"And what, most patient sir," said Pausanias, with calm sarcasm, though his eye shot fire, and the upper lip, on which no Spartan suffered the beard to grow, slightly quivered, — "what is *your* contribution to the catalogue of complaints?"

"Jest not, Pausanias; you will find me in earnest," answered Uliades, doggedly, and encouraged by the evident effect that his eloquence had produced upon the Spartans themselves. "I have met with a grievous wrong, and all Greece shall hear of it, if it be not redressed. My own brother, who at Mycale slew four Persians with his own hand, headed a detachment for forage. He and his men were met by a company of mixed Laconians and Helots, their forage taken from them, they themselves assaulted, and my brother, a man who has moneys and maintains forty slaves of his own, struck thrice across the face by a rascally Helot. Now, Pausanias, your answer."

"You have prepared a notable scene for the commander of your forces, son of Lysimachus," said the Spartan, addressing himself to Aristides. "Far be it from me to affect the Agamemnon, but your friends are less modest in imitating the venerable model of Thersites. Enough," and changing the tone of his voice, the chief stamped his foot vehemently to the ground; "we owe no account to our inferiors, we render no explanation save to Sparta and her ephors."

"So be it, then," said Aristides, gravely; "we have our answer, and you will hear of our appeal."

Pausanias changed colour. "How," said he, with a slight hesitation in his tone, "mean you to threaten me — me — with carrying the busy tales of your disaffection to the Spartan government?"

"Time will show. Farewell, Pausanias. We will detain you no longer from your pastime."

"But," began Uliades.

"Hush," said the Athenian, laying his hand on the Samian's shoulder; "we will confer anon."

Pausanias paused a moment, irresolute and in thought. His eyes glanced towards his own countrymen, who, true to their rigid discipline, neither spake nor moved, but whose countenances were sullen and overcast, and at that moment his pride was shaken, and his heart misgave him. Gongylus watched his countenance, and once more laying his hand on his arm, said in a whisper, —

"He who seeks to rule never goes back."

"Tush! you know not the Spartans."

"But I know Human Nature, — it is the same everywhere. You cannot yield to this insolence; to-morrow, of your own accord, send for these men separately and pacify them."

"You are right. Now to the vessel!"

With this, leaning on the shoulder of the Persian, and with a slight wave of his hand towards the Athenians, — he did not deign even that gesture to the island officers, — Pausanias advanced to the vessel, and slowly ascending, disappeared within his pavilion. The Spartans and the musicians followed; then, spare and swarthy, some half score of Egyptian sailors; last came a small party of Laconians and Helots, who, standing at some distance behind Pausanias, had not hitherto been observed. The former were but slightly armed; the latter had forsaken their customary rude and savage garb, and wore long gowns and gay tunics, somewhat in the fashion of the Lydians. With these last there was one of a mien and aspect that strongly differed from the lowering and ferocious cast of countenance common to the Helot race. He was of the ordinary stature, and his frame was not characterized by any appearance of unusual strength; but he trod the earth with a firm step and an erect crest, as if the curse of the slave had not yet destroyed the inborn dignity of the human being. There was a certain delicacy and refinement, rather of thought than beauty, in his clear, sharp, and singularly intelligent features. In contradistinction from the free-born Spartans, his hair was short, and curled close above a broad and manly forehead; and his large eyes of dark blue looked full and bold upon the Athenians with something, if not of defiance, at least of pride in their gaze, as he stalked by them to the vessel.

"A sturdy fellow for a Helot," muttered Cimon.

"And merits well his freedom," said the son of Lysimachus.

"I remember him well. He is Aleman, the foster-brother of Pausanias, whom he attended at Plataea. Not a Spartan that day bore himself more bravely."

"No doubt they will put him to death when he goes back to

Sparta," said Antagoras. "When a Helot is brave, the ephors clap the black mark against his name, and at the next crypteia he suddenly disappears."

"Pausanias may share the same fate as his Helot, for all I care," quoth Uliades. "Well, Athenians, what say you to the answer we have received?"

"That Sparta shall hear of it," answered Aristides.

"Ah, but is that all? Recollect the Ionians have the majority in the fleet; let us not wait for the slow ephors. Let us at once throw off this insufferable yoke, and proclaim Athens the Mistress of the Seas. What say you, Cimon?"

"Let Aristides answer."

"Yonder lie the Athenian vessels," said Aristides. "Those who put themselves voluntarily under our protection we will not reject. But remember we assert no claim; we yield but to the general wish."

"Enough; I understand you," said Antagoras.

"Not quite," returned the Athenian, with a smile. "The breach between you and Pausanias is begun, but it is not yet wide enough. You yourselves must do that which will annul all power in the Spartan; and then if ye come to Athens ye will find her as bold against the Doric despot as against the Barbarian foe."

"But speak more plainly. What would you have us do?" asked Uliades, rubbing his chin in great perplexity.

"Nay, nay, I have already said enough. Fare ye well, fellow-countrymen;" and leaning lightly on the shoulder of Cimon, the Athenian passed on.

Meanwhile, the splendid galley of Pausanias slowly put forth into the farther waters of the bay. The oars of the rowers broke the surface into countless phosphoric sparkles, and the sound they made as they dashed amidst the gentle waters seemed to keep time with the song and the instruments on the deck. The Ionians gazed in silence as the stately vessel, now shooting far ahead of the rest, swept into the centre of the bay; and the moon, just rising, shone full upon the glittering prow, and streaked the rippling billows over which it had bounded, with a light, as it were, of glory.

Antagoras sighed.

"What think you of?" asked the rough Samian.

"Peace!" replied Antagoras. "In this hour, when the fair face of Artemis recalls the old legends of Endymion, is it not permitted to man to remember that before the iron age came the golden, — before war reigned love?"

"Tush!" said Uliades. "Time enough to think of love when we have satisfied vengeance. Let us summon our friends, and hold counsel on the Spartan's insults."

"Whither goes now the Spartan?" murmured Antagoras, abstractedly, as he suffered his companion to lead him away. Then, halting abruptly, he struck his clenched hand on his breast.

"O Aphrodite!" he cried; "this night, this night I will seek thy temple. Hear my vows, soothe my jealousy!"

"Ah," grunted Uliades, "if, as men say, thou lovest a fair Byzantine, Aphrodite will have sharp work to cure thee of jealousy, unless she first makes thee blind."

Antagoras smiled faintly, and the two Ionians moved on slowly and in silence. In a few minutes more the quays were deserted, and nothing but the blended murmur, spreading wide and indistinct throughout the camp, and a noisier but occasional burst of merriment from those resorts of obscener pleasure which were profusely scattered along the haven, mingled with the whispers of "the far resounding sea."

CHAPTER II.

On a couch beneath his voluptuous awning reclined Pausanias. The curtains, drawn aside, gave to view the moonlit ocean and the dim shadows of the shore, with the dark woods beyond, relieved by the distant lights of the city. On one side of the Spartan was a small table that supported goblets and vases of that exquisite wine which Maronea proffered to

the thirst of the Byzantine, and those cooling and delicious fruits which the orchards around the city supplied as amply as the fabled gardens of the Hesperides, were heaped on the other side. Towards the foot of the couch, propped upon cushions piled on the floor, sat Gongylus, conversing in a low, earnest voice, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on the Spartan. The habits of the Eretrian's life, which had brought him in constant contact with the Persians, had infected his very language with the luxuriant extravagance of the East; and the thoughts he uttered made his language but too musical to the ears of the listening Spartan.

"And fair as these climes may seem to you, and rich as are the gardens and granaries of Byzantium, yet to me who have stood on the terraces of Babylon, and looked upon groves covering with blossom and fruit the very fortresses and walls of that queen of nations, — to me, who have roved amidst the vast delights of Susa, through palaces whose very porticos might enclose the limits of a Grecian city; who have stood, awed and dazzled, in the courts of that wonder of the world, that crown of the East, the marble magnificence of Persepolis, — to me, Pausanias, who have been thus admitted into the very heart of Persian glories, this city of Byzantium appears but a village of artisans and fishermen; the very foliage of its forests pale and sickly, the very moonlight upon these waters cold and smileless. Ah, if thou couldst but see! But pardon me, I weary thee."

"Not so," said the Spartan, who, raised upon his elbow, listened to the words of Gongylus with deep attention. "Proceed."

"Ah, if thou couldst but see the fair regions which the Great King has apportioned to thy countryman Demaratus. And if a domain that would satiate the ambition of the most craving of your earlier tyrants fall to Demaratus, what would be the splendid satrapy in which the conqueror of Plataea might plant his throne!"

"In truth, my renown and my power are greater than those ever possessed by Demaratus," said the Spartan, musingly.

"Yet," pursued Gongylus, "it is not so much the mere

extent of the territories which the grateful Xerxes could proffer to the brave Pausanias, it is not their extent so much that might tempt desire, neither is it their stately forests, nor the fertile meadows, nor the ocean-like rivers, which the gods of the East have given to the race of Cyrus. There, free from the strange constraints which our austere customs and solemn deities impose upon the Greeks, the beneficent Ormuzd scatters ever-varying delights upon the paths of men. All that art can invent, all that the marts of the universe can afford of the rare and voluptuous, are lavished upon abodes the splendour of which even our idle dreams of Olympus never shadowed forth. There, instead of the harsh and imperious helpmate to whom the joyless Spartan confines his reluctant love, all the beauties of every clime contend for the smile of their lord. And wherever are turned the change-loving eyes of Passion, the Aphrodite of our poets, such as the Cytherean and the Cyprian fable her, seems to recline on the lotus-leaf, or to rise from the unruffled ocean of delight. Instead of the gloomy brows and the harsh tones of rivals envious of your fame, hosts of friends aspiring only to be followers will catch gladness from your smile, or sorrow from your frown. There, no jarring contests with little men, who deem themselves the equals of the great, no jealous ephor is found, to load the commonest acts of life with fetters of iron custom. Talk of liberty! liberty in Sparta is but one eternal servitude; you cannot move, or eat, or sleep, save as the law directs. Your very children are wrested from you just in the age when their voices sound most sweet. Ye are not men, ye are machines. Call you this liberty, Pausanias? I, a Greek, have known both Grecian liberty and Persian royalty. Better be chieftain to a king than servant to a mob. But in Eretria, at least, pleasure was not denied; in Sparta the very Graces preside over discipline and war only."

"Your fire falls upon flax," said Pausanias, rising, and with passionate emotion. "And if you, the Greek of a happier state, you who know but by report the unnatural bondage to which the Spartans are subjected, can weary of the very name of Greek, what must be the feelings of one

who from the cradle upward has been starved out of the genial desires of life? Even in earliest youth, while yet all other lands and customs were unknown, when it was duly poured into my ears that to be born a Spartan constituted the glory and the bliss of earth, my soul sickened at the lesson, and my reason revolted against the lie. Often when my whole body was lacerated with stripes, disdaining to groan, I yet yearned to strike, and I cursed my savage tutors who denied pleasure even to childhood, with all the madness of impotent revenge. My mother herself (sweet name elsewhere) had no kindness in her face. She was the pride of the matronage of Sparta, because of all our women Alithea was the most unsexed. When I went forth to my first crypteia, to watch, amidst the wintry dreariness of the mountains, upon the movements of the wretched Helots, to spy upon their sufferings, to take account of their groans, and if one more manly than the rest dared to mingle curses with his groans, to mark *him* for slaughter, as a wolf that threatened danger to the fold; to lurk, an assassin, about his home, to dog his walks, to fall on him unawares, to strike him from behind, to flch away his life, to bury him in the ravines, so that murder might leave no trace, — when upon this initiating campaign, the virgin trials of our youth, I first set forth, my mother drew near, and girding me herself with my grandsire's sword, 'Go forth,' she said, 'as the young hound to the chase, to wind, to double, to leap on the prey, and to taste of blood. See, the sword is bright: show me the stains at thy return.'"

"Is it then true, as the Greeks generally declare," interrupted Gongylus, "that in these campaigns, or crypteias, the sole aim and object is the massacre of Helots?"

"Not so," replied Pausanias; "savage though the custom, it smells not so foully of the shambles. The avowed object is to harden the nerves of our youth. Barefooted, unattended, through cold and storm, performing ourselves the most menial offices necessary to life, we wander for a certain season daily and nightly through the rugged territories of Laconia.¹ We

¹ Plato, *Leges*, i. p. 633. See also Müller, *Dorians*, ii. 41.

go as boys, — we come back as men.¹ The avowed object, I say, is inurement to hardship; but with this is connected the secret end of keeping watch on those half-tamed and bull-like herds of men whom we call the Helots. If any be dangerous, we mark him for the knife. One of them had thrice been a ringleader in revolt. He was wary as well as fierce. He had escaped in three succeeding crypteias. To me, as one of the Heraclidæ, was assigned the honour of tracking and destroying him. For three days and three nights I dogged his footsteps (for he had caught the scent of the pursuers and fled) through forest and defile, through valley and crag, stealthily and relentlessly. I followed him close. At last, one evening, having lost sight of all my comrades, I came suddenly upon him as I emerged from a wood. It was a broad patch of waste land, through which rushed a stream swollen by the rains, and plunging with a sullen roar down a deep and gloomy precipice, that to the right and left bounded the waste, the stream in front, the wood in the rear. He was reclining by the stream at which, with the hollow of his hand, he quenched his thirst. I paused to gaze upon him, and as I did so he turned and saw me. He rose and fixed his eyes on mine, and we examined each other in silence. The Helots are rarely of tall stature, but this was a giant. His dress, that of his tribe, — of rude sheepskins, and his cap made from the hide of a dog, — increased the savage rudeness of his appearance. I rejoiced that he saw me, and that, as we were alone, I might fight him fairly. It would have been terrible to slay the wretch if I had caught him in his sleep."

"Proceed," said Gongylus, with interest; for so little was known of Sparta by the rest of the Greeks, especially outside the Peloponnesus, that these details gratified his natural spirit of gossiping inquisitiveness.

"Stand!" said I, and he moved not. I approached him slowly. 'Thou art a Spartan,' said he, in a deep and harsh voice, 'and thou comest for my blood. Go, boy, go; thou art not mellowed to thy prime, and thy comrades are far away.

¹ *Pueros puberes; neque prius in urbem redire quam viri facti essent.* — JUSTINIUS, iii. 3.

The shears of the Fatal deities hover over the thread, not of my life, but of thine.' I was struck, Gongylus, by this address, for it was neither desperate nor dastardly, as I had anticipated; nevertheless, it beseemed not a Spartan to fly from a Helot, and I drew the sword which my mother had girded on. The Helot watched my movements, and seized a rude and knotted club that lay on the ground beside him.

"'Wretch,' said I, 'darest thou attack, face to face, a descendant of the Heraclidæ? In me behold Pausanias, the son of Cleombrotus.'

"'Be it so; in the city one is the god-born, the other the man-enslaved. On the mountains we are equals.'

"'Knowest thou not,' said I, 'that if the Gods condemned me to die by thy hand, not only thou, but thy whole house, thy wife and thy children, would be sacrificed to my ghost?'

"'The earth can hide the Spartan's bones as secretly as the Helot's,' answered my strange foe. 'Begone, young and unfleshed in slaughter as you are; why make war upon me? My death can give you neither gold nor glory. I have never harmed thee or thine. How much of the air and sun does this form take from the descendant of the Heraclidæ?'

"'Thrice hast thou raised revolt among the Helots; thrice at thy voice have they risen in bloody, though fruitless, strife against their masters.'

"'Not at my voice, but at that of the two deities who are the war-gods of slaves, — Persecution and Despair.'¹

"Impatient of this parley, I tarried no longer. I sprang upon the Helot. He evaded my sword, and I soon found that all my agility and skill were requisite to save me from the massive weapon, one blow of which would have sufficed to crush me. But the Helot seemed to stand on the defensive, and continued to back towards the wood from which I had emerged. Fearful lest he should escape me, I pressed hard on his footsteps. My blood grew warm; my fury got the

¹ When Themistocles sought to extort tribute from the Andrians, he said, "I bring with me two powerful gods,—Persuasion and Force." "And on our side," was the answer, "are two deities not less powerful,—Poverty and Despair!"

better of my prudence. My foot stumbled; I recovered in an instant, and, looking up, beheld the terrible club suspended over my head: it might have fallen, but the stroke of death was withheld. I misinterpreted the merciful delay; the lifted arm left the body of my enemy exposed. I struck him on the side; the thick hide blunted the stroke, but it drew blood. Afraid to draw back within the reach of his weapon, I threw myself on him, and grappled to his throat. We rolled on the earth together; it was but a moment's struggle. Strong as I was even in boyhood, the Helot would have been a match for Alcides. A shade passed over my eyes, my breath heaved short. The slave was kneeling on my breast, and, dropping the club, he drew a short knife from his girdle. I gazed upon him grim and mute. I was conquered, and I cared not for the rest.

"The blood from his side, as he bent over me, trickled down upon my face.

"And this blood," said the Helot, 'you shed in the very moment when I spared your life: such is the honour of a Spartan. Do you not deserve to die?'

"Yes, for I am subdued, and by a slave. Strike!'

"There," said the Helot, in a melancholy and altered tone, 'there speaks the soul of the Dorian,—the fatal spirit to which the Gods have rendered up our wretched race. We are doomed, doomed, and one victim will not expiate our curse. Rise, return to Sparta, and forget that thou art innocent of murder.'

"He lifted his knee from my breast, and I rose, ashamed and humbled.

"At that instant I heard the crashing of the leaves in the wood, for the air was exceedingly still. I knew that my companions were at hand. 'Fly,' I cried, 'fly! If they come I cannot save thee, royal though I be. Fly!'

"And *wouldst* thou save me?' said the Helot, in surprise.

"Ay, with my own life. Canst thou doubt it? Lose not a moment. Fly! Yet stay;' and I tore off a part of the woollen vest that I wore. 'Place this at thy side; stanch the blood, that it may not track thee. Now begone!'

"The Helot looked hard at me, and I thought there were tears in his rude eyes; then, catching up the club with as much ease as I this staff, he sped with inconceivable rapidity, despite his wound, towards the precipice on the right, and disappeared amidst the thick brambles that clothed the gorge. In a few moments three of my companions approached. They found me exhausted, and panting rather with excitement than fatigue. Their quick eyes detected the blood upon the ground. I gave them no time to pause and examine. 'He has escaped me, he has fled,' I cried; 'follow;' and I led them to the opposite part of the precipice from that which the Helot had taken. Heading the search, I pretended to catch a glimpse of the goatskin ever and anon through the trees, and I stayed not the pursuit till night grew dark, and I judged the victim was far away."

"And he escaped?"

"He did. The crypteia ended. Three other Helots were slain, but not by me. We returned to Sparta, and my mother was comforted for my misfortune in not having slain my foe by seeing the stains on my grandsire's sword. I will tell thee a secret, Gongylus," — and here Pausanias lowered his voice, and looked anxiously towards him, — "since that day I have not hated the Helot race. Nay, it may be that I have loved them better than the Dorian."

"I do not wonder at it; but has not your wounded giant yet met with his death?"

"No; I never related what had passed between us to any one save my father. He was gentle for a Spartan, and he rested not till Gylippus — so was the Helot named — obtained exemption from the black list. He dared not, however, attribute his intercession to the true cause. It happened, fortunately, that Gylippus was related to my own foster-brother, Aleman, — brother to my nurse; and Aleman is celebrated in Sparta, not only for courage in war, but for arts in peace. He is a poet, and his strains please the Dorian ear, for they are stern and simple, and they breathe of war. Aleman's merits won forgiveness for the offences of Gylippus. May the Gods be kind to his race!"

"Your Alcman seems one of no common intelligence, and your gentleness to him does not astonish me, though it seems often to raise a frown on the brows of your Spartans."

"We have lain on the same bosom," said Pausanias, touchingly, "and his mother was kinder to me than my own. You must know that to those Helots who have been our foster-brothers, and whom we distinguish by the name of Mothons, our stern law relaxes. They have no rights of citizenship, it is true, but they cease to be slaves,¹—nay, sometimes they attain, not only to entire emancipation, but to distinction. Alcman has bound his fate to mine. But to return, Gongylus. I tell thee that it is not thy descriptions of pomp and dominion that allure me, though I am not above the love of power, neither is it thy glowing promises, though blood too wild for a Dorian runs riot in my veins; but it is my deep loathing, my inexpressible disgust, for Sparta and her laws, my horror at the thought of wearing away life in those sullen customs, amid that joyless round of tyrannic duties, — in my rapture at the hope of escape, of life in a land which the eye of the ephor never pierces: this it is, and this alone, O Persian, that makes me (the words must out) a traitor to my country, one who dreams of becoming a dependant on her foe."

"Nay," said Gongylus, eagerly; for here Pausanias moved uneasily, and the colour mounted to his brow. "Nay, speak not of dependence. Consider the proposals that you can alone condescend to offer to the Great King. Can the conqueror of Plataea, with millions for his subjects, hold himself dependent, even on the sovereign of the East? How, hereafter, will the memories of our sterile Greece and your rocky Sparta fade from your mind, or be remembered only as a state of thralldom and bondage which your riper manhood has outgrown!"

"I will try to think so, at least," said Pausanias, gloomily. "And, come what may, I am not one to recede. I have thrown my shield into a fearful peril; but I will win it back, or perish. Enough of this, Gongylus. Night advances. I will

¹ The appellation of Mothons was not confined to the Helots who claimed the connection of foster-brothers, but was given also to household slaves.

attend the appointment you have made. Take the boat, and within an hour I will meet you with the prisoners at the spot agreed on, near the Temple of Aphrodite. All things are prepared?"

"All," said Gongylus, rising, with a gleam of malignant joy on his dark face. "I leave thee, kingly slave of the rocky Sparta, to prepare the way for thee as satrap of half the East."

So saying, he quitted the awning, and motioned three Egyptian sailors who lay on the deck without. A boat was lowered, and the sound of its oars woke Pausanias from the revery into which the parting words of the Eretrian had plunged his mind.

CHAPTER III.

WITH a slow and thoughtful step, Pausanias passed on to the outer deck. The moon was up, and the vessel scarcely seemed to stir, so gently did it glide along the sparkling waters. They were still within the bay, and the shores rose, white and distinct, to his view. A group of Spartans, reclining by the side of the ship, were gazing listlessly on the waters. The regent paused beside them.

"Ye weary of the ocean, methinks," said he. "We Dorians have not the merchant tastes of the Ionians."¹

"Son of Cleombrotus," said one of the group, a Spartan whose rank and services entitled him to more than ordinary familiarity with the chief, "it is not the ocean itself that we should dread, it is the contagion of those who, living on the element, seem to share in its ebb and flow. The Ionians are never three hours in the same mind."

"For that reason," said Pausanias, fixing his eyes steadfastly on the Spartan, "for that reason I have judged it advisable to adopt a rough manner with these innovators, — to draw with a broad chalk the line between them and the

¹ No Spartan served as a sailor, or indeed condescended to any trade or calling but that of war.

Spartans, and to teach those who never knew discipline the stern duties of obedience. Think you I have done wisely?"

The Spartan, who had risen when Pausanias addressed him, drew his chief a little aside from the rest.

"Pausanias," said he, "the hard Naxian stone best tames and tempers the fine steel;¹ but the steel may break if the workman be not skilful. These Athenians are grown insolent since Marathon, and their soft kindred of Asia have relighted the fires they took of old from the Cecropian Prytaneum. Their sail is more numerous than ours; on the sea they find the courage they lose on land. Better be gentle with those wayward allies, for the Spartan greyhound shows not his teeth but to bite."

"Perhaps you are right. I will consider these things, and appease the mutineers. But it goes hard with my pride, Thrasyllus, to make equals of this soft-tongued race. Why, these Ionians, do they not enjoy themselves in perpetual holidays, spend days at the banquet, ransack earth and sea for dainties and for perfumes?—and shall they be the equals of us men who, from the age of seven to that of sixty, are wisely taught to make life so barren and toilsome that we may well have no fear of death? I hate these sleek and merry feast-givers; they are a perpetual insult to our solemn existence."

There was a strange mixture of irony and passion in the Spartan's voice as he thus spoke, and Thrasyllus looked at him in grave surprise.

"There is nothing to envy in the woman-like debaucheries of the Ionian," said he, after a pause.

"Envy! no; we only hate them, Thrasyllus. Yon Eretrian tells me rare things of the East. Time may come when we shall sup on the black broth in Susa."

"The Gods forbid! Sparta never invades. Life with us is too precious, for we are few. Pausanias, I would we were well quit of Byzantium. I do not suspect you, not I; but there are those who look with vexed eyes on those garments, and I, who love you, fear the sharp jealousies of the ephors, to whose ears the birds carry all tidings."

¹ Pindar, Isth. v. (vi.) 73.

"My poor Thrasyllus," said Pausanias, laughing scornfully, "think you that I wear these robes, or mimic the Median manners, for love of the Mede? No, no! But there are arts which save countries as well as those of war. This Gongylus is in the confidence of Xerxes. I desire to establish a peace for Greece upon everlasting foundations. Reflect: Persia hath millions yet left. Another invasion may find a different fortune; and even at the best, Sparta gains nothing by these wars. Athens triumphs, not Lacedæmon. I would, I say, establish a peace with Persia; I would that Sparta, not Athens, should have that honour. Hence these flatteries to the Persian, — trivial to us who render them, sweet and powerful to those who receive. Remember these words hereafter, if the ephors make question of my discretion. And now, Thrasyllus, return to our friends, and satisfy them as to the conduct of Pausanias."

Quitting Thrasyllus, the regent now joined a young Spartan who stood alone by the prow in a musing attitude.

"Lysander, my friend, my only friend, my best-loved Lysander," said Pausanias, placing his hand on the Spartan's shoulder, "and why so sad?"

"How many leagues are we from Sparta?" answered Lysander, mournfully.

"And canst thou sigh for the black broth, my friend? Come, how often hast thou said, 'Where Pausanias is, *there* is Sparta!'"

"Forgive me, I am ungrateful," said Lysander, with warmth. "My benefactor, my guardian, my hero, forgive me if I have added to your own countless causes of anxiety. Wherever you are, there is life, and there glory. When I was just born, sickly and feeble, I was exposed on Taygetus. You, then a boy, heard my faint cry, and took on me that compassion which my parents had forsworn. You bore me to your father's roof, you interceded for my life. You prevailed even on your stern mother. I was saved; and the Gods smiled upon the infant whom the son of the humane Hercules protected. I grew up strong and hardy, and belied the signs of my birth. My parents then owned me; but still

you were my fosterer, my saviour, my more than father. As I grew up, placed under your care, I imbibed my first lessons of war. By your side I fought, and from your example I won glory. Yes, Pausanias, even here, amidst luxuries which revolt me more than the Parthian bow and the Persian sword, even amidst the faces of the stranger, I still feel thy presence my home, thyself my Sparta."

The proud Pausanias was touched, and his voice trembled as he replied: "Brother in arms and in love, whatever service fate may have allowed me to render unto thee, thy high nature and thy cheering affection have more than paid me back. Often in our lonely rambles amidst the dark oaks of the sacred Scotitas,¹ or by the wayward waters of Tiasa,² when I have poured into thy faithful breast my impatient loathing, my ineffable distaste for the iron life, the countless and wearisome tyrannies of custom which surround the Spartans, often have I found a consoling refuge in thy divine contentment, thy cheerful wisdom. Thou lovest Sparta: why is she not worthier of thy love? Allowed only to be half men, in war we are demigods, in peace, slaves. Thou wouldst interrupt me. Be silent. I am in a wilful mood; thou canst not comprehend me, and I often marvel at thee. Still, we are friends, — such friends as the Dorian discipline, which makes friendship necessary in order to endure life, alone can form. Come, take up thy staff and mantle. Thou shalt be my companion ashore. I seek one whom alone in the world I love better than thee. To-morrow to stern duties once more. Alcman shall row us across the bay, and as we glide along, if thou wilt praise Sparta, I will listen to thee as the Ionians listen to their tale-tellers. Ho! Alcman, stop the rowers and lower the boat."

The orders were obeyed, and a second boat soon darted towards the same part of the bay as that to which the one that bore Gongylus had directed its course. Thrasyllus and his companions watched the boat that bore Pausanias and his two comrades as it bounded, arrow-like, over the glassy sea.

"Whither goes Pausanias?" asked one of the Spartans.

¹ Pausanias, *Laconica*, x.

² *Ibid.*, c. xviii.

"Back to Byzantium on business," replied Thrasyllus.

"And we?"

"Are to cruise in the bay till his return."

"Pausanias is changed."

"Sparta will restore him to what he was. Nothing thrives out of Sparta. Even man spoils."

"True, sleep is the sole constant friend, the same in all climates."

CHAPTER IV.

ON the shore to the right of the port of Byzantium were at that time thickly scattered the villas or suburban retreats of the wealthier and more luxurious citizens. Byzantium was originally colonized by the Megarians, a Dorian race kindred with that of Sparta, and the old features of the pure and antique Hellas were still preserved in the dialect,¹ as well as in the forms of the descendants of the colonists; in their favourite deities and rites and traditions; even in the names of places, transferred from the sterile Megara to that fertile coast; in the rigid and helot-like slavery to which the native Bithynians were subjected; and in the attachment of their masters to the oligarchic principles of government. Nor was it till long after the present date that democracy, in its most corrupt and licentious form, was introduced amongst them. But like all the Dorian colonies, when once they departed from the severe and masculine mode of life inherited from their ancestors, the reaction was rapid, the degeneracy complete. Even then the Byzantines, intermingled with the foreign merchants and traders that thronged their haven, and womanized by the soft contagion of the East, were voluptuous, timid, and prone to every excess save that of valour. The higher class were exceedingly wealthy, and gave to their vices or

¹ The Byzantine dialect was in the time of Philip, as we know from the decree in Demosthenes, rich in Dorisms. — Müller on the Doric Dialect.

their pleasures a splendour and refinement of which the elder States of Greece were as yet unconscious. At a later period, indeed, we are informed that the Byzantine citizens had their habitual residence in the public hostels, and let their houses—not even taking the trouble to remove their wives—to the strangers who crowded their gay capital. And when their general found it necessary to demand their aid on the ramparts, he could only secure their attendance by ordering the taverns and cookshops to be removed to the place of duty. Not yet so far sunk in sloth and debauch, the Byzantines were nevertheless hosts eminently dangerous to the austere manners of their Greek visitors. The people, the women, the delicious wine, the balm of the subduing climate, served to tempt the senses and relax the mind. Like all the Dorians, when freed from primitive restraint, the higher class, that is, the descendants of the colonists, were in themselves an agreeable, jovial race. They had that strong bias to humour, to jest, to satire, which in their ancestral Megara gave birth to the Grecian comedy, and which lurked even beneath the pithy aphorisms and rude merry-makings of the severe Spartan.

Such were the people with whom of late Pausanias had familiarly mixed, and with whose manners he contrasted, far too favourably for his honour and his peace, the habits of his countrymen.

It was in one of the villas we have described, the favourite abode of the rich Diagoras, and in an apartment connected with those more private recesses of the house appropriated to the females, that two persons were seated by a window which commanded a wide view of the glittering sea below. One of these was an old man in a long robe that reached to his feet, with a bald head and a beard in which some dark hairs yet withstood the encroachments of the gray. In his well-cut features and large eyes were remains of the beauty that characterized his race; but the mouth was full and wide, the forehead low, though broad, the cheeks swollen, the chin double, and the whole form corpulent and unwieldy. Still, there was a jolly, sleek good-humour about the aspect of the

man that prepossessed you in his favour. This personage, who was no less than Diagoras himself, was reclining lazily upon a kind of narrow sofa cunningly inlaid with ivory, and studying new combinations in that scientific game which Palamedes is said to have invented at the siege of Troy.

His companion was of a very different appearance. She was a girl who to the eye of a Northern stranger might have seemed about eighteen, though she was probably much younger, of a countenance so remarkable for intelligence that it was easy to see that her mind had outgrown her years. Beautiful she certainly was, yet scarcely of that beauty from which the Greek sculptor would have drawn his models. The features were not strictly regular, and yet so harmoniously did each blend with each that to have amended one would have spoiled the whole. There was in the fulness and depth of the large but genial eye, with its sweeping fringe, and straight, slightly chiselled brow, more of Asia than of Greece. The lips, of the freshest red, were somewhat full and pouting, and dimples without number lay scattered round them, — lurking-places for the Loves. Her complexion was clear, though dark, and the purest and most virgin bloom mantled, now paler, now richer, through the soft surface. At the time we speak of she was leaning against the open door with her arms crossed on her bosom, and her face turned towards the Byzantine. Her robe, of a deep yellow, so trying to the fair women of the North, became well the glowing colours of her beauty, — the damask cheek, the purple hair. Like those of the Ionians, the sleeves of the robe, long and loose, descended to her hands, which were marvellously small and delicate. Long earrings, which terminated in a kind of berry, studded with precious stones, then common only with the women of the East; a broad collar, or necklace, of the smaragdus, or emerald; and large clasps, medallion-like, where the swan-like throat joined the graceful shoulder, — gave to her dress an appearance of opulence and splendour that betokened how much the ladies of Byzantium had borrowed from the fashions of the Oriental world. Nothing could exceed the lightness of her form, rounded, it is true, but slight and girlish; and the

high instep, with the slender foot, so well set off by the embroidered sandal, would have suited such dances as those in which the huntress nymphs of Delos moved around Diana. The natural expression of her face, if countenance so mobile and changeful had one expression more predominant than another, appeared to be irresistibly arch and joyous, as of one full of youth and conscious of her beauty; yet if a cloud came over the face, nothing could equal the thoughtful and deep sadness of the dark, abstracted eyes, as if some touch of higher and more animated emotion, such as belongs to pride, or courage, or intellect, vibrated on the heart. The colour rose, the form dilated, the lip quivered, the eye flashed light, and the mirthful expression heightened almost into the sublime. Yet, lovely as Cleonice was deemed at Byzantium, lovelier still as she would have appeared in modern eyes, she failed in what the Greeks generally, but especially the Spartans, deemed an essential of beauty, — in height of stature. Accustomed to look upon the virgin but as the future mother of a race of warriors, the Spartans saw beauty only in those proportions which promised a robust and stately progeny; and the reader may remember the well-known story of the opprobrious reproaches, even, it is said, accompanied with stripes, which the ephors addressed to a Spartan king for presuming to make choice of a wife below the ordinary stature. Cleonice was small and delicate, rather like the Peri of the Persian than the sturdy Grace of the Dorian. But her beauty was her least charm. She had all that feminine fascination of manner, wayward, varying, inexpressible, yet irresistible, which seizes hold of the imagination, as well as the senses, and which has so often made willing slaves of the proud rulers of the world. In fact, Cleonice, the daughter of Diagoras, had enjoyed those advantages of womanly education wholly unknown at that time to the freeborn ladies of Greece proper, but which gave to the women of some of the isles and Ionian cities their celebrity in ancient story. Her mother was of Miletus, famed for the intellectual cultivation of the sex, no less than for their beauty; of Miletus, the birthplace of Aspasia; of Miletus, from which those

remarkable women who, under the name of Hetæaræ, exercised afterwards so signal an influence over the mind and manners of Athens, chiefly derived their origin, and who seem to have inspired an affection which, in depth, constancy, and fervour, approached to the more chivalrous passion of the North. Such an education consisted not only in the feminine and household arts honoured universally throughout Greece, but in a kind of spontaneous and luxuriant cultivation of all that captivates the fancy and enlivens the leisure. If there were something pedantic in their affectation of philosophy, it was so graced and vivified by a brilliancy of conversation, a charm of manner carried almost to a science, a womanly facility of softening all that comes within their circle, of suiting yet refining each complexity and discord of character admitted to their intercourse, that it had at least nothing masculine or harsh. Wisdom, taken lightly or easily, seemed but another shape of poetry. The matrons of Athens, who could often neither read nor write, — ignorant, vain, tawdry, and not always faithful, if we may trust to such scandal as has reached the modern time, — must have seemed insipid beside these brilliant strangers; and while certainly wanting their power to retain love, must have had but a doubtful superiority in the qualifications that ensure esteem. But we are not to suppose that the Hetæaræ (that mysterious and important class peculiar to a certain state of society, and whose appellation we cannot render by any proper word in modern language) monopolized all the graces of their countrywomen. In the same cities were many of unblemished virtue and repute who possessed equal cultivation and attraction, but whom a more decorous life has concealed from the equivocal admiration of posterity, though the numerous female disciples of Pythagoras throw some light on their capacity and intellect. Amongst such as these had been the mother of Cleonice, not long since dead; and her daughter inherited and equalled her accomplishments, while her virgin youth, her inborn playfulness of manner, her pure guilelessness, which the secluded habits of the unmarried women at Byzantium preserved from all contagion, gave to qualities and gifts so little published

abroad, the effect as it were of a happy and wondrous inspiration rather than of elaborate culture.

Such was the fair creature whom Diagoras, looking up from his pastime, thus addressed:—

“And so, perverse one, thou canst not love this great hero, a proper person truly, and a mighty warrior, who will eat you an army of Persians at a meal. These Spartan fighting-cocks want no garlic, I warrant you.¹ And yet you can’t love him, you little rogue!”

“Why, my father,” said Cleonice, with an arch smile and a slight blush, “even if I did look kindly on Pausanias, would it not be to my own sorrow? What Spartan—above all, what royal Spartan—may marry with a foreigner and a Byzantine?”

“I did not precisely talk of marriage, — a very happy state, doubtless, to those who dislike too quiet a life, and a very honourable one; for war is honour itself. But I did not speak of that, Cleonice. I would only say that this man of might loves thee; that he is rich, rich, rich. Pretty pickings at Plataea; and we have known losses, my child, sad losses. And if you do not love him, why, you can but smile and talk as if you did, and when the Spartan goes home, you will lose a tormentor and gain a dowry.”

“My father, for shame!”

“Who talks of shame? You women are always so sharp at finding oracles in oak-leaves that one don’t wonder Apollo makes choice of your sex for his priests. But listen to me, girl, seriously,” and here Diagoras with a great effort raised himself on his elbow, and lowering his voice, spoke with evident earnestness. “Pausanias has life and death, and, what is worse, wealth or poverty in his hands; he can raise or ruin us with a nod of his head, this black-curled Jupiter. They tell me that he is fierce, irascible, haughty; and what slighted lover is not revengeful? For my sake, Cleonice, for your poor

¹ Fighting-cocks were fed with garlic to make them more fierce. The learned reader will remember how Theorus advised Dicæopolis to keep clear of the Thracians with garlic in their mouths.—See the “Acharnians” of Aristophanes.

father's sake, show no scorn, no repugnance; be gentle, play with him, draw not down the thunderbolt, even if you turn from the golden shower."

While Diagoras spoke, the girl listened with downcast eyes and flushed cheeks, and there was an expression of such shame and sadness on her countenance that even the Byzantine, pausing and looking up for a reply, was startled by it.

"My child," said he, hesitatingly and absorbed, "do not misconceive me. Cursed be the hour when the Spartan saw thee; but since the Fates have so served us, let us not make bad worse. I love thee, Cleonice, more dearly than the apple of my eye; it is for *thee* I fear, for thee I speak. Alas! it is not dishonour I recommend, it is force I would shun."

"Force!" said the girl, drawing up her form with sudden animation. "Fear not that. It is not Pausanias I dread, it is —"

"What then?"

"No matter; talk of this no more. Shall I sing to thee?"

"But Pausanias will visit us this very night."

"I know it. Hark!" and with her finger to her lip, her ear bent downward, her cheek varying from pale to red, from red to pale, the maiden stole beyond the window to a kind of platform or terrace that overhung the sea. There, the faint breeze stirring her long hair, and the moonlight full upon her face, she stood as stood that immortal priestess who looked along the starry Hellespont for the young Leander; and her ear had not deceived her. The oars were dashing in the waves below, and dark and rapid the boat bounded on towards the rocky shore. She gazed long and steadfastly on the dim and shadowy forms which that slender raft contained, and her eye detected amongst the three the loftier form of her haughty wooer. Presently the thick foliage that clothed the descent shut the boat, nearing the strand, from her view; but she now heard below, mellowed and softened in the still and fragrant air, the sound of the cithara and the melodious song of the Mothon, thus imperfectly rendered from the language of immortal melody.

SONG.

Carry a sword in the myrtle-bough,
Ye who would honour the tyrant-slayer;
I, in the leaves of the myrtle-bough,
Carry a tyrant to slay myself.

I plucked the branch with a hasty hand,
But Love was lurking amidst the leaves;
His bow is bent and his shaft is poised,
And I must perish or pass the bough.

Maiden, I come with a gift to thee;
Maiden, I come with a myrtle wreath:
Over thy forehead or round thy breast
Bind, I implore thee, my myrtle wreath.¹

From hand to hand by the banquet lights
On with the myrtle-bough passes song;
From hand to hand by the silent stars
What with the myrtle-wreath passes? Love.

I bear the god in a myrtle-wreath:
Under the stars let him pass to thee;
Empty his quiver and bind his wings,
Then pass the myrtle-wreath back to me.

Cleonice listened breathlessly to the words, and sighed heavily as they ceased. Then, as the foliage rustled below, she turned quickly into the chamber and seated herself at a little distance from Diagoras, — to all appearance calm, indifferent, and composed. Was it nature, or the arts of Miletus, that taught the young beauty the hereditary artifices of the sex?

“So it is he, then?” said Diagoras, with a fidgety and nervous trepidation. “Well, he chooses strange hours to visit us. But he is right; his visits cannot be too private. Cleonice, you look provokingly at your ease.”

Cleonice made no reply, but shifted her position so that the light from the lamp did not fall upon her face, while her

¹ Garlands were twined round the neck, or placed upon the bosom (*ὑποθυμιάδες*). See the quotations from Alcæus, Sappho, and Anacreon in Athenæus, book xiii. c. 17.

father, hurrying to the threshold of his hall to receive his illustrious visitor, soon re-appeared with the Spartan regent, talking as he entered with the volubility of one of the parasites of Alciphron and Athenæus.

"This is most kind, most affable. Cleonice said you would come, Pausanias, though I began to distrust you. The hours seem long to those who expect pleasure."

"And, Cleonice, *you* knew that I should come," said Pausanias, approaching the fair Byzantine; but his step was timid, and there was no pride now in his anxious eye and bended brow.

"You said you would come to-night," said Cleonice, calmly; "and Spartans, according to proverbs, speak the truth."

"When it is to their advantage, yes,"¹ said Pausanias, with a slight curl of his lips; and as if the girl's compliment to his countrymen had roused his spleen and changed his thoughts, he seated himself moodily by Cleonice and remained silent.

The Byzantine stole an arch glance at the Spartan, as he thus sat, from the corner of her eyes, and said, after a pause, —

"You Spartans ought to speak the truth more than other people, for you say much less. We too have our proverb at Byzantium, and one which implies that it requires some wit to tell fibs."

"Child, child!" exclaimed Diagoras, holding up his hand reprovingly, and directing a terrified look at the Spartan. To his great relief, Pausanias smiled, and replied, —

"Fair maiden, we Dorians are said to have a wit peculiar to ourselves; but I confess that it is of a nature that is but little attractive to your sex. The Athenians are blander wooers."

"Do you ever attempt to woo in Lacedæmon, then? Ah, but the maidens there, perhaps, are not difficult to please."

¹ So said Thucydides of the Spartans many years afterwards. "They give evidence of honour among themselves, but with respect to others they consider honourable whatever pleases them, and just whatever is to their advantage." See Thucydides, lib. v.

"The girl puts me in a cold sweat," muttered Diagoras, wiping his brow. And this time Pausanias did not smile; he coloured, and answered gravely, —

"And is it, then, a vain hope for a Spartan to please a Byzantine?"

"You puzzle me. That is an enigma: put it to the oracle."

The Spartan raised his eyes towards Cleonice; and as she saw the inquiring, perplexed look that his features assumed, the ruby lips broke into so wicked a smile, and the eyes that met his had so much laughter in them, that Pausanias was fairly bewitched out of his own displeasure.

"Ah, cruel one," said he, lowering his voice, "I am not so proud of being Spartan that the thought should console me for thy mockery."

"Not proud of being Spartan! Say not so," exclaimed Cleonice. "Who ever speaks of Greece, and places not Sparta at her head? Who ever speaks of freedom, and forgets Thermopylæ? Who ever burns for glory, and sighs not for the fame of Pausanias and Plataea? Ah, yes, even in jest say not that you are not proud to be a Spartan!"

"The little fool!" cried Diagoras, chuckling, and mightily delighted; "she is quite mad about Sparta, — no wonder!"

Pausanias, surprised and moved by the burst of the fair Byzantine, gazed at her admiringly, and thought within himself how harshly the same sentiment would have sounded on the lips of a tall Spartan virgin; but when Cleonice heard the approving interlocation of Diagoras, her enthusiasm vanished from her face, and putting out her lips poutingly, she said, "Nay, Father, I repeat only what others say of the Spartans. They are admirable heroes; but from the little I have seen, they are —"

"What?" said Pausanias, eagerly, and leaning nearer to Cleonice.

"Proud, dictatorial, and stern as companions."

Pausanias once more drew back.

"There it is again!" groaned Diagoras. "I feel exactly as if I were playing at odd-and-even with a lion; she does it to vex me. I shall retaliate and creep away."

"Cleonice," said Pausanias, with suppressed emotion, "you trifle with me, and I bear it."

"You are condescending. How would you avenge yourself?"

"How?"

"You would not beat me; you would not make me bear an anchor on the shoulders, as they say you do your soldiers. Shame on you! *you* bear with me! True, what help for you?"

"Maiden," said the Spartan, rising in great anger, "for him who loves and is slighted there is a revenge you have not mentioned."

"For him who *loves*! No, Spartan; for him who shuns disgrace and courts the fame dear to gods and men, there is no revenge upon women. Blush for your threat."

"You madden, but subdue me," said the Spartan as he turned away. He then first perceived that Diagoras had gone, — that they were alone. His contempt for the father awoke suspicion of the daughter. Again he approached, and said: "Cleonice, I know but little of the fables of poets; yet is it an old maxim, often sung and ever belied, that love scorned becomes hate. There are moments when I think I hate thee."

"And yet thou hast never loved me," said Cleonice; and there was something soft and tender in the tone of her voice, and the rough Spartan was again subdued.

"I never loved thee! What, then, is love? Is not thine image always before me? Amidst schemes, amidst perils, of which thy very dreams have never presented equal perplexity or phantoms so uncertain, I am occupied but with thee. Surely, as upon the hyacinth is written the exclamation of woe, so on this heart is graven thy name. Cleonice, you who know not what it is to love, you affect to deny or to question mine."

"And what," said Cleonice, blushing deeply, and with tears in her eyes, "what result can come from such a love? You may not wed with the stranger. And yet, Pausanias, yet you know that all other love dishonours the virgin even of Byzantium. You are silent; you turn away. Ah, do not let them

wrong you. My father fears your power. If you love me you are powerless; your power has passed to me. Is it not so? I, a weak girl, can rule, command, irritate, mock you, if I will. You may fly me, but not control."

"Do not tempt me too far, Cleonice," said the Spartan, with a faint smile.

"Nay, I will be merciful henceforth; and you, Pausanias, come here no more. Awake to the true sense of what is due to your divine ancestry, your great name. Is it not told of you that, after the fall of Mardonius, you nobly dismissed to her country, unscathed and honoured, the captive Coan lady?¹ Will you reverse at Byzantium the fame acquired at Plateæ? Pausanias, spare us; appeal not to my father's fear, still less to his love of gold."

"I cannot, I cannot fly thee," said the Spartan, with great emotion. "You know not how stormy, how inexorable, are the passions which burst forth after a whole youth of restraint. When Nature breaks the barriers, she rushes headlong on her course. I am no gentle wooer: where in Sparta should I learn the art? But if I love thee not as these mincing Ionians, who come with offerings of flowers and song, I do love thee with all that fervour of which the old Dorian legends tell. I could brave, like the Thracian, the dark gates of Hades, were thy embrace my reward. Command me as thou wilt, — make me thy slave in all things, even as Hercules was to Omphale; but tell me only that I may win thy love at last. Fear not. Why fear me? In my wildest moments a look from thee can control me. I ask but love for love. Without thy love thy beauty were valueless. Bid me not despair."

Cleonice turned pale, and the large tears that had gathered in her eyes fell slowly down her cheeks; but she did not withdraw her hand from his clasp, or avert her countenance from his eyes.

"I do not fear thee," said she, in a very low voice. "I told my father so; but — but —" (and here she drew back her hand and averted her face) "I fear myself."

¹ Herodotus, ix.

"An, no, no," cried the delighted Spartan, detaining her; "do not fear to trust to thine own heart. Talk not of dishonour. There are," and here the Spartan drew himself up, and his voice took a deeper swell, — "there are those on earth who hold themselves above the miserable judgments of the vulgar herd, who can emancipate themselves from those galling chains of custom and of country which helotize affection, genius, Nature herself. What is dishonour here may be glory elsewhere; and this hand, outstretched towards a mightier sceptre than Greek ever wielded yet, may dispense, not shame and sorrow, but glory and golden affluence to those I love."

"You amaze me, Pausanias. *Now* I fear you. What mean these mysterious boasts? Have you the dark ambition to restore in your own person that race of tyrants whom your country hath helped to sweep away? Can you hope to change the laws of Sparta, and reign there, your will the State?"

"Cleonice, we touch upon matters that should not disturb the ears of women. Forgive me if I have been roused from myself."

"At Miletus — so have I heard my mother say — there were women worthy to be the confidants of men."

"But they were women who loved. Cleonice, I should rejoice in an hour when I might pour every thought into thy bosom."

At this moment there was heard on the strand below a single note from the Mothon's instrument, low, but prolonged; it ceased, and was again renewed. The royal conspirator started, and breathed hard.

"It is the signal," he muttered; "they wait me. Cleonice," he said aloud, and with much earnestness in his voice, "I had hoped, ere we parted, to have drawn from your lips those assurances which would give me energy for the present, and hope in the future. Ah, turn not from me because my speech is plain, and my manner rugged. What, Cleonice, what if I could defy the laws of Sparta; what if, instead of that gloomy soil, I could bear thee to lands where heaven and man alike smile benignant on love? Might I not hope then?"

"Do nothing to sully your fame."

"Is it, then, dear to thee?"

"It is a part of thee," said Cleonice, falteringly; and as if she had said too much, she covered her face with her hands.

Emboldened by this emotion, the Spartan gave way to his passion and his joy. He clasped her in his arms, — his first embrace, — and kissed, with wild fervour, the crimsoned forehead, the veiling hands. Then, as he tore himself away, he cast his right arm aloft.

"O Hercules!" he cried, in a solemn and kindling adjuration, "my ancestor and my divine guardian, it was not by confining thy labours to one spot of earth that thou wert borne from thy throne of fire to the seats of the Gods. Like thee, I will spread the influence of my arms to nations whose glory shall be my name; and as thy sons, my fathers, expelled from Sparta, returned thither with sword and spear to defeat usurpers and to found the long dynasty of the Heracleids, even so may it be mine to visit that dread abode of torturers and spies, and to build up in the halls of the Atridæ a power worthier of the lineage of the demigod. Again the signal! Fear not, Cleonice, I will not tarnish my fame, but I will exchange the envy of abhorring rivals for the obedience of a world. One kiss more! Farewell!"

Ere Cleonice recovered herself, Pausanias was gone, his wild and uncomprehended boasts still ringing in her ear. She sighed heavily, and turned towards the opening that admitted to the terraces. There she stood watching for the parting of her lover's boat. It was midnight; the air, laden with the perfumes of a thousand fragrant shrubs and flowers that bloom along that coast in the rich luxuriance of Nature, was hushed and breathless. In its stillness every sound was audible, — the rustling of a leaf, the ripple of a wave. She heard the murmur of whispered voices below, and in a few moments she recognized, emerging from the foliage, the form of Pausanias; but he was not alone. Who were his companions? In the deep lustre of that shining and splendid atmosphere she could see sufficient of the outline of their figures to observe that they were not dressed in the Grecian garb; their long robes betrayed the Persian.

They seemed conversing familiarly and eagerly as they passed along the smooth sands, till a curve in the wooded shore hid them from her view.

"Why do I love him so," said the girl, mechanically, "and yet wrestle against that love? Dark forebodings tell me that Aphrodite smiles not on our vows. Woe is me! What will be the end?"

CHAPTER V.

ON quitting Cleonice, Pausanias hastily traversed the long passage that communicated with a square peristyle, or colonnade, which again led, on the one hand to the more public parts of the villa, and on the other, through a small door left ajar, conducted by a back entrance to the garden and the seashore. Pursuing the latter path, the Spartan bounded down the descent, and came upon an opening in the foliage, in which Lysander was seated beside the boat that had been drawn partially on the strand.

"Alone? Where is Alcman?"

"Yonder; you heard his signal?"

"I heard it."

"Pausanias, they who seek you are Persians. Beware!"

"Of what? Murder? I am warned."

"Murder to your good name. There are no arms against appearances."

"But I may trust thee," said the regent, quickly, "and of Alcman's faith I am convinced."

"Why trust to any man what it were wisdom to reveal to the whole Grecian Council? To parley secretly with the foe is half a treason to our friends."

"Lysander," replied Pausanias, coldly, "you have much to learn before you can be wholly Spartan. Tarry here yet awhile."

"What shall I do with this boy?" muttered the conspirator as he strode on. "I know that he will not betray me, yet

can I hope for his aid? I love him so well that I would fain he shared my fortunes. Perhaps by little and little I may lead him on. Meanwhile, his race and his name are so well accredited in Sparta, his father himself an ephor, that his presence allays suspicion. Well, here are my Persians."

A little apart from the Mothon, who, resting his cithara on a fragment of rock, appeared to be absorbed in reflection, stood the men of the East. There were two of them, — one of tall stature and noble presence, in the prime of life; the other more advanced in years, of a coarser make, a yet darker complexion, and of a sullen and gloomy countenance. They were not dressed alike: the taller, a Persian of pure blood, wore a short tunic that reached only to the knees, and the dress fitted to his shape without a single fold. On his round cap, or bonnet, glittered a string of those rare pearls, especially and immemorially prized in the East, which formed the favourite and characteristic ornament of the illustrious tribe of the Pasargadæ. The other, who was a Mede, differed scarcely in his dress from Pausanias himself, except that he was profusely covered with ornaments; his arms were decorated with bracelets, he wore earrings, and a broad collar of unpolished stones in a kind of filigree was suspended from his throat. Behind the Orientals stood Gongylus, leaning both hands on his staff, and watching the approach of Pausanias with the same icy smile and glittering eye with which he listened to the passionate invectives or flattered the dark ambition of the Spartan. The Orientals saluted Pausanias with a lofty gravity, and Gongylus, drawing near, said: "Son of Cleombrotus, the illustrious Ariamanes, kinsman to Xerxes and of the house of the Achæmenids, is so far versed in the Grecian tongue that I need not proffer my offices as interpreter. In Datis the Mede, brother to the most renowned of the Magi, you behold a warrior worthy to assist the arms even of Pausanias."

"I greet you in our Spartan phrase, 'The beautiful to the good,'" said Pausanias, regarding the Barbarians with an earnest gaze. "And I requested Gongylus to lead you hither in order that I might confer with you more at ease than in

the confinement to which I regret you are still sentenced. Not in prisons should be held the conversations of brave men."

"I know," said Ariamanes, the statelier of the Barbarians, in the Greek tongue, which he spoke intelligibly indeed, but with slowness and hesitation, "I know that I am with that hero who refused to dishonour the corpse of Mardonius; and even though a captive, I converse without shame with my victor."

"Rested it with me alone, your captivity should cease," replied Pausanias. "War, that has made me acquainted with the valour of the Persians, has also enlightened me as to their character. Your king has ever been humane to such of the Greeks as have sought a refuge near his throne. I would but imitate his clemency."

"Had the great Darius less esteemed the Greeks he would never have invaded Greece. From the wanderers whom misfortune drove to his realms he learned to wonder at the arts, the genius, the energies of the people of Hellas. He desired less to win their territories than to gain such subjects. Too vast, alas! was the work he bequeathed to Xerxes."

"He should not have trusted to force alone," returned Pausanias. "Greece may be won, but by the arts of her sons, not by the arms of the stranger. A Greek only can subdue Greece. By such profound knowledge of the factions, the interests, the envies, and the jealousies of each State as a Greek alone can possess, the mistaken chain that binds them might be easily severed; some bought, some intimidated, and the few that hold out subdued amidst the apathy of the rest."

"You speak wisely, right hand of Hellas," answered the Persian, who had listened to these remarks with deep attention. "Yet had we in our armies your countryman, the brave Demarátus."

"But if I have heard rightly, ye too often disdained his counsel. Had he been listened to, there had been neither a Salamis nor a Plataea.¹ Yet Demaratus himself had been too

¹ After the action at Thermopylae, Demaratus advised Xerxes to send three hundred vessels to the Laconian coast and seize the island of Cythera, which

long a stranger to Greece, and he knew little of any State save that of Sparta. Lives he still?"

"Surely yes, in honour and renown, — little less than the son of Darius himself."

"And what reward would Xerxes bestow on one of greater influence than Demaratus, — on one who has hitherto conquered every foe, and now beholds before him the conquest of Greece herself?"

"If such a man were found," answered the Persian, "let his thought run loose, let his imagination rove, let him seek only how to find a fitting estimate of the gratitude of the king and the vastness of the service."

Pausanias shaded his brow with his hand, and mused a few moments; then, lifting his eyes to the Persian's watchful but composed countenance, he said, with a slight smile, —

"Hard is it, O Persian, when the choice is actually before him, for a man to renounce his country. There have been hours within this very day when my desires swept afar from Sparta, from all Hellas, and rested on the tranquil pomp of Oriental satrapies. But now, rude and stern parent though Sparta be to me, I feel still that I am her son; and while we speak, a throne in stormy Hellas seems the fitting object of a Greek's ambition. In a word, then, I would rise, and yet raise my country. I would have at my will a force that may suffice to overthrow in Sparta its grim and unnatural laws, to found amidst its rocks that single throne which the son of a demigod should ascend. From that throne I would spread my empire over the whole of Greece, Corinth and Athens being my tributaries. So that though men now, and posterity hereafter, may say, 'Pausanias overthrew the Spartan

commanded Sparta. "The profound experience of Demaratus in the selfish and exclusive policy of his countrymen made him argue that if this were done, the fear of Sparta for herself would prevent her joining the forces of the rest of Greece, and leave the latter a more easy prey to the invader." — *Athens, its Rise and Fall*.

This advice was overruled by Achæmenes. So again, had the advice of Artemisia, the Carian princess, been taken, — to delay the naval engagement of Salamis, and rather to sail to the Peloponnesus, — the Greeks, failing of provisions, and divided among themselves, would probably have dispersed.

government,' they shall add, 'but Pausanias annexed to the Spartan sceptre the realm of Greece. Pausanias was a tyrant, but not a traitor.' How, O Persian, can these designs accord with the policy of the Persian king?"

"Not without the authority of my master can I answer thee," replied Ariamanes, "so that my answer may be as the king's signet to his decree. But so much at least I say: that it is not the custom of the Persians to interfere with the institutions of those States with which they are connected. Thou desirest to make a monarchy of Greece, with Sparta for its head. Be it so; the king my master will aid thee so to scheme and so to reign, provided thou dost but concede to him a vase of the water from thy fountains, a fragment of earth from thy gardens."

"In other words," said Pausanias, thoughtfully, but with a slight colour on his brow, "if I hold my dominions tributary to the king?"

"The dominions that by the king's aid thou wilt have conquered. Is that a hard law?"

"To a Greek and a Spartan the very mimicry of allegiance to the foreigner is hard."

The Persian smiled. "Yet if I understand thee aright, O Chief, even kings in Sparta are but subjects to their people. Slave to a crowd at home, or tributary to a throne abroad; slave every hour, or tributary for earth and water once a year, — which is the freer lot?"

"Thou canst not understand our Grecian notions," replied Pausanias, "nor have I leisure to explain them. But though I may subdue Sparta to myself as to its native sovereign, I will not, even by a type, subdue the land of the Heracleid to the Barbarian."

Ariamanes looked grave; the difficulty raised was serious. And here the craft of Gongylus interposed.

"This may be adjusted, Ariamanes, as befits both parties. Let Pausanias rule in Sparta as he lists, and Sparta stand free of tribute. But for all other States and cities that Pausanias, aided by the Great King, shall conquer, let the vase be filled, and the earth be Grecian; let him but render tribute for those

lands which the Persians submit to his sceptre, — so shall the pride of the Spartan be appeased, and the claims of the king be satisfied."

"Shall it be so?" said Pausanias.

"Instruct me so to propose to my master, and I will do my best to content him with the exception to the wonted rights of the Persian diadem. And then," continued Ariamanes, "then, Pausanias, Conqueror of Mardonius, Captain at Plataea, thou art indeed a man with whom the lord of Asia may treat as an equal. Greeks before thee have offered to render Greece to the king my master; but they were exiles and fugitives, they had nothing to risk or lose, — thou hast fame and command and power and riches and all —"

"But for a throne," interrupted Gongylus.

"It does not matter what may be my motives," returned the Spartan, gloomily, "and were I to tell them, you might not comprehend. But so much by way of explanation. You too have held command?"

"I have."

"If you knew that when power became to you so sweet that it was as necessary to life itself as food and drink, it would then be snatched from you forever, and you would serve as a soldier in the very ranks you had commanded as a leader; if you knew that no matter what your services, your superiority, your desires, this shameful fall was inexorably doomed, — might you not see humiliation in power itself, obscurity in renown, gloom in the present, despair in the future? And would it not seem to you nobler even to desert the camp than to sink into a subaltern?"

"Such a prospect has in our country made out of good subjects fierce rebels," observed the Persian.

"Ay, ay, I doubt it not," said Pausanias, laughing bitterly. "Well, then, such will be my lot if I pluck not out a fairer one from the Fatal Urn. As regent of Sparta, while my nephew is beardless I am general of her armies, and I have the sway and functions of her king. When he arrives at the customary age, I am a subject, a citizen, a nothing, a miserable fool of memories gnawing my heart away amidst joyless

customs and stern austerities, with the recollection of the glories of Plataea and the delights of Byzantium. Persian, I am filled from the crown to the sole with the desire of power, with the tastes of pleasure. I have that within me which before my time has made heroes and traitors, raised demigods to heaven, or chained the lofty Titans to the rocks of Hades. Something I may yet be; I know not what. But as the man never returns to the boy, so never, never, never once more can I be again the Spartan subject. Enough; such as I am, I can fulfil what I have said to thee. Will thy king accept me as his ally, and ratify the terms I have proposed?"

"I feel wellnigh assured of it," answered the Persian; "for since thou hast spoken thus boldly, I will answer thee in the same strain. Know, then, that we of the pure race of Persia, we the sons of those who overthrew the Mede, and extended the race of the mountain tribe from the Scythian to the Arab, from Egypt to Ind, we at least feel that no sacrifice were too great to redeem the disgrace we have suffered at the hands of thy countrymen; and the world itself were too small an empire, too confined a breathing-place, for the son of Darius if this nook of earth were still left without the pale of his dominion."

"This nook of earth? Ay, but Sparta itself must own no lord but me."

"It is agreed."

"If I release thee, wilt thou bear these offers to the king, travelling day and night till thou retest at the foot of his throne?"

"I should carry tidings too grateful to suffer me to loiter by the road."

"And Datis, he comprehends us not; but his eyes glitter fiercely on me. It is easy to see that thy comrade loves not the Greek."

"For that reason he will aid us well. Though but a Mede, and not admitted to the privileges of the Pasargadae, his relationship to the most powerful and learned of our Magi, and his own services in war, have won him such influence with both priests and soldiers that I would fain have him as my

companion. I will answer for his fidelity to our joint object."

"Enough; ye are both free. Gongylus, you will now conduct our friends to the place where the steeds await them. You will then privately return to the citadel, and give to their pretended escape the probable appearances we devised. Be quick, while it is yet night. One word more. Persian, our success depends upon thy speed. It is while the Greeks are yet at Byzantium, while I yet am in command, that we should strike the blow. If the king consent, through Gongylus thou wilt have means to advise me. A Persian army must march at once to the Phrygian confines, instructed to yield command to me when the hour comes to assume it. Delay not that aid by such vast and profitless recruits as swelled the pomp, but embarrassed the arms, of Xerxes. Armies too large rot by their own unwieldiness into decay. A band of fifty thousand, composed solely of the Medes and Persians, will more than suffice. With such an army, if my command be undisputed, I will win a second Plataea, but against the Greek."

"Your suggestions shall be law. May Ormuzd favour the bold!"

"Away, Gongylus. You know the rest."

Pausanias followed with thoughtful eyes the receding forms of Gongylus and the Barbarians. "I have passed forever," he muttered, "the Pillars of Hercules. I must go on, or perish. If I fall, I die execrated and abhorred; if I succeed, the sound of the choral flutes will drown the hootings. Be it as it may, I do not and will not repent. If the wolf gnaw my entrails, none shall hear me groan." He turned, and met the eyes of Alcman, fixed on him so intently, so exultingly, that, wondering at their strange expression, he drew back and said haughtily, "You imitate Medusa; but I am stone already."

"Nay," said the Mothon, in a voice of great humility, "if you are of stone, it is like the divine one which, when borne before armies, secures their victory. Blame me not that I gazed on you with triumph and hope; for while you conferred

with the Persian, methought the murmurs that reached my ear sounded thus: 'When Pausanias shall rise, Sparta shall bend low, and the Helot shall break his chains.'"

"They do not hate me, these Helots?"

"You are the only Spartan they love."

"Were my life in danger from the ephors —"

"The Helots would rise to a man."

"Did I plant my standard on Taygetus, though all Sparta encamped against it —"

"All the slaves would cut their way to thy side. O Pausanias, think how much nobler it were to reign over tens of thousands who become freemen at thy word, than to be but the equal of ten thousand tyrants."

"The Helots fight well, when well led," said Pausanias, as if to himself. "Launch the boat."

"Pardon me, Pausanias, but is it prudent any longer to trust Lysander? He is the pattern of the Spartan youth, and Sparta is his mistress. He loves her too well not to blab to her every secret."

"O Sparta, Sparta, wilt thou not leave me one friend?" exclaimed Pausanias. "No, Alcman, I will not separate myself from Lysander till I despair of his alliance. To your oars; be quick."

At the sound of the Mothon's tread upon the pebbles, Lysander, who had hitherto remained motionless, reclining by the boat, rose and advanced towards Pausanias. There was in his countenance, as the moon shining on it cast over his statue-like features a pale and marble hue, so much of anxiety, of affection, of fear, so much of the evident, unmistakable solicitude of friendship, that Pausanias, who, like most men, envied and unloved, was susceptible even of the semblance of attachment, muttered to himself, "No, thou wilt not desert me, nor I thee."

"My friend, my Pausanias," said Lysander, as he approached, "I have had fears, I have seen omens. Undertake nothing, I beseech thee, which thou hast meditated this night."

"And what hast thou seen?" said Pausanias, with a slight change of countenance.

"I was praying the Gods for thee and Sparta, when a star shot suddenly from the heavens. Pausanias, this is the eighth year, — the year in which on moonless nights the ephors watch the heavens."

"And if a star fall, they judge their kings," interrupted Pausanias, with a curl of his haughty lip, "to have offended the Gods, and suspend them from their office till acquitted by an oracle at Delphi, or a priest at Olympia. A wise superstition! But, Lysander, the night is not moonless, and the omen is therefore nought."

Lysander shook his head mournfully, and followed his chieftain to the boat in gloomy silence.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

AT noon the next day, not only the vessels in the harbour presented the same appearance of inactivity and desertion which had characterized the preceding evening, but the camp itself seemed forsaken. Pausanias had quitted his ship for the citadel in which he took up his lodgment when on shore, and most of the officers and sailors of the squadron were dispersed among the taverns and wine-shops, for which, even at that day, Byzantium was celebrated.

It was in one of the lowest and most popular of these latter resorts, and in a large and rude chamber, or rather outhouse, separated from the rest of the building, that a number of the Laconian Helots were assembled. Some of these were employed as sailors; others were the military attendants on the regent and the Spartans who accompanied him.

At the time we speak of, these unhappy beings were in the full excitement of that wild and melancholy gayety which is almost peculiar to slaves in their hours of recreation, and in which reaction of wretchedness modern writers have discovered the indulgence of a native humour. Some of them were drinking deep, wrangling, jesting, laughing in loud discord over their cups. At another table rose the deep voice of a singer, chanting one of those antique airs known but to these degraded sons of the Homeric Achæan, and probably in its origin going beyond the date of the Tale of Troy, — a song of gross and rustic buffoonery, but ever and anon charged with some image or thought worthy of that language of the universal Muses. His companions listened with a rude delight to the rough voice and homely sounds, and now and then inter-

rupted the wassailers at the other tables by cries for silence, which none regarded. Here and there, with intense and fierce anxiety on their faces, small groups were playing at dice; for gambling is the passion of slaves. And many of these men, to whom wealth could bring no comfort, had secretly amassed large hoards at the plunder of Plataea, from which they had sold to the traders of Ægina gold at the price of brass. The appearance of the rioters was startling and melancholy. They were mostly stunted and undersized, as are generally the progeny of the sons of woe, lean and gaunt with early hardship, the spine of the back curved and bowed by habitual degradation, but with the hardknit sinews and prominent muscles which are produced by labour and the mountain air; and under shaggy and lowering brows sparkled many a fierce, perfidious, and malignant eye, while as mirth or gaming or song aroused smiles in the various groups, the rude features spoke of passions easily released from the sullen bondage of servitude, and revealed the nature of the animals which thralldom had failed to tame. Here and there, however, were to be seen forms, unlike the rest, of stately stature, of fair proportions, wearing the divine lineaments of Grecian beauty. From some of these a higher nature spoke out, not in mirth, — that last mockery of supreme woe, — but in an expression of stern, grave, and disdainful melancholy. Others, on the contrary, surpassed the rest in vehemence, clamour, and exuberant extravagance of emotion, as if their nobler physical development only served to entitle them to that base superiority; for health and vigour can make an aristocracy even among Helots. The garments of these merrymakers increased the peculiar effect of their general appearance. The Helots in military excursions naturally relinquished the rough sheepskin dress that characterized their countrymen at home, the serfs of the soil. The sailors had thrown off, for coolness, the leathern jerkins they habitually wore, and, with their bare arms and breasts, looked as if of a race that yet shivered, primitive and unredeemed, on the outskirts of civilization.

Strangely contrasted with their rougher comrades, were

those who, placed occasionally about the person of the regent, were indulged with the loose and clean robes of gay colours worn by the Asiatic slaves; and these ever and anon glanced at their finery with an air of conscious triumph. Altogether, it was a sight that might well have appalled, by its solemn lessons of human change, the poet who would have beheld in that imbruted flock the descendants of the race over whom Pelops and Atreus and Menelaus and Agamemnon the king of men had held their antique sway, and might still more have saddened the philosopher who believed, as Menander has nobly written, that "Nature knows no slaves."

Suddenly, in the midst of the confused and uproarious hubbub, the door opened, and Aleman the Mothon entered the chamber. At this sight the clamour ceased in an instant. The party rose, as by a general impulse, and crowded round the new-comer.

"My friends," said he, regarding them with the same calm and frigid indifference which usually characterized his demeanour, "you do well to make merry while you may, for something tells me it will not last long. We shall return to Lacedæmon. You look black. So, then, is there no delight in the thought of home?"

"*Home!*" muttered one of the Helots; and the word, sounding drearily on his lips, was echoed by many, so that it circled like a groan.

"Yet ye have your children as much as if ye were free," said Aleman.

"And for that reason it pains us to see them play, unaware of the future," said a Helot of better mien than his comrades.

"But do you know," returned the Mothon, gazing on the last speaker steadily, "that for your children there may not be a future fairer than that which your fathers knew?"

"Tush!" exclaimed one of the unhappy men, old before his time, and of an aspect singularly sullen and ferocious. "Such have been your half-hints and mystic prophecies for years. What good comes of them? Was there ever an oracle for Helots?"

"There was no repute in the oracles even of Apollo,"

returned Aleman, "till the Apollo-serving Dorians became conquerors. Oracles are the children of victories."

"But there are no victories for us," said the first speaker, mournfully.

"Never, if ye despair," said the Mothon, loftily. "What," he added, after a pause, looking round at the crowd, "what, do ye not see that hope dawned upon us from the hour when thirty-five thousand of us were admitted as soldiers, ay, and as conquerors, at Plataea? From that moment we knew our strength. Listen to me. At Samos once a thousand slaves—mark me, but a thousand—escaped the yoke, seized on arms, fled to the mountains (we have mountains even in Laconia), descended from time to time to devastate the fields and to harass their ancient lords. By habit they learned war, by desperation they grew indomitable. What became of these slaves? Were they cut off? Did they perish by hunger, by the sword, in the dungeon or field? No; those brave men were the founders of Ephesus."¹

"But the Samians were not Spartans," mumbled the old Helot.

"As ye will, as ye will," said Aleman, relapsing into his usual coldness. "I wish you never to strike unless ye are prepared to die or conquer."

"Some of us are," said the younger Helot.

"Sacrifice a cock to the Fates, then."

"But why think you," asked one of the Helots, "that we shall be so soon summoned back to Laconia?"

"Because while ye are drinking and idling here, drones that ye are, there is commotion in the Athenian bee-hive yonder. Know that Ariamanes the Persian and Datis the Mede have escaped. The allies, especially the Athenians, are excited and angry; and many of them are already come in a body to Pausanias, whom they accuse of abetting the escape of the fugitives."

"Well?"

"Well, and if Pausanias does not give honey in his words, —and few flowers grow on his lips, —the bees will sting, that

¹ Malacus *apud* Athenæus, 6.

is all. A trireme will be despatched to Sparta with complaints. Pausanias will be recalled, — perhaps his life endangered."

"Endangered!" echoed several voices.

"Yes. What is that to you, — what care you for his danger? He is a Spartan."

"Ay," cried one, "but he has been kind to the Helots."

"And we have fought by his side," said another.

"And he dressed my wound with his own hand," murmured a third.

"And we have got money under him," growled a fourth.

"And more than all," said Alcman, in a loud voice, "if he lives, he will break down the Spartan government. Ye will not let this man die?"

"Never!" exclaimed the whole assembly. Alcman gazed with a kind of calm and strange contempt on the flashing eyes, the fiery gestures, of the throng, and then said, coldly, —

"So, then, ye would fight for one man?"

"Ay, ay, that would we."

"But not for your own liberties and those of your children unborn?"

There was a dead silence; but the taunt was felt, and its logic was already at work in many of these rugged breasts.

At this moment the door was suddenly thrown open, and a Helot, in the dress worn by the attendants of the regent, entered, breathless and panting.

"Alcman! the gods be praised you are here. Pausanias commands your presence. Lose not a moment. And you too, comrades, by Demeter, do you mean to spend whole days at your cups? Come to the citadel; ye may be wanted."

This was spoken to such of the Helots as belonged to the train of Pausanias.

"Wanted, — what for?" said one. "Pausanias gives us a holiday while he employs the sleek Egyptians."

"Who that serves Pausanias ever asks that question, or can foresee from one hour to another what he may be required to do?" returned the self-important messenger, with great contempt.

Meanwhile the Mothon, all whose movements were peculiarly silent and rapid, was already on his way to the citadel. The distance was not inconsiderable, but Alcman was swift of foot. Tightening the girdle round his waist, he swung himself, as it were, into a kind of run, which, though not seemingly rapid, cleared the ground with a speed almost rivalling that of the ostrich, from the length of the stride and the extreme regularity of the pace. Such was at that day the method by which messages were despatched from State to State, especially in mountainous countries; and the length of way which was performed, without stopping, by the foot-couriers might startle the best-trained pedestrians in our times. So swiftly, indeed, did the Mothon pursue his course that just by the citadel he came up with the Grecian captains who, before he joined the Helots, had set off for their audience with Pausanias. There were some fourteen or fifteen of them, and they so filled up the path, which, just there, was not broad, that Alcman was obliged to pause as he came upon their rear.

"And whither so fast, fellow?" said Uliades the Samian, turning round as he heard the strides of the Mothon.

"Please you, master, I am bound to the general."

"Oh, his slave! Is he going to free you?"

"I am already as free as a man who has no city can be."

"Pithy. The Spartan slaves have the dryness of their masters. How, sirrah! do you jostle me?"

"I crave pardon. I only seek to pass."

"Never! to take precedence of a Samian. Keep back."

"I dare not."

"Nay, nay, let him pass," said the young Chian, Antagoras; "he will get scourged if he is too late. Perhaps, like the Persians, Pausanias wears false hair, and wishes the slave to dress it in honour of us."

"Hush!" whispered an Athenian. "Are these taunts prudent?"

Here there suddenly broke forth a loud oath from Uliades, who, lingering a little behind the rest, had laid rough hands on the Mothon, as the latter once more attempted to pass him.

With a dexterous and abrupt agility, Alcman had extricated himself from the Samian's grasp, but with a force that swung the captain on his knee. Taking advantage of the position of the foe, the Mothon darted onward, and threading the rest of the party, disappeared through the neighbouring gates of the citadel.

"You saw the insult?" said Uliades between his ground teeth as he recovered himself. "The master shall answer for the slave; and to me, too, who have forty slaves of my own at home!"

"Pooh! think no more of it," said Antagoras, gayly; "the poor fellow meant only to save his own hide."

"As if that were of any consequence! My slaves are brought up from the cradle not to know if they have hides or not. You may pinch them by the hour together, and they don't feel you. My little ones do it, in rainy weather, to strengthen their fingers. The Gods keep them!"

"An excellent gymnastic invention. But we are now within the citadel. Courage! the Spartan greyhound has long teeth."

Pausanias was striding with hasty steps up and down a long and narrow peristyle, or colonnade, that surrounded the apartments appropriated to his private use, when Alcman joined him.

"Well, well," cried he, eagerly, as he saw the Mothon. "You have mingled with the common gangs of these worshipful seamen, these new men, these Ionians: think you they have so far overcome their awe of the Spartan that they would obey the mutinous commands of their officers?"

"Pausanias, the truth must be spoken, — Yes!"

"Ye Gods! one would think each of these wranglers imagined he had a whole Persian army in his boat. Why, I have seen the day when, if in any assembly of Greeks a Spartan entered, the sight of his very hat and walking-staff cast a terror through the whole conclave."

"True, Pausanias; but they suspect that Sparta herself will disown her general."

"Ah! say they so?"

"With one voice."

Pausanias paused a moment in deep and perturbed thought.

"Have they dared yet, think you, to send to Sparta?"

"I hear not; but a trireme is in readiness to sail after your conference with the captains."

"So, Alcman, it were ruin to my schemes to be recalled until — until —"

"The hour to join the Persians on the frontier; yes."

"One word more. Have you had occasion to sound the Helots?"

"But half an hour since. They will be true to you. Lift your right hand, and the ground where you stand will bristle with men who fear death even less than the Spartans."

"Their aid were useless here against the whole Grecian fleet; but in the defiles of Laconia, otherwise. I am prepared then for the worst, — even recall."

Here a slave crossed from a kind of passage that led from the outer chambers into the peristyle.

"The Grecian captains have arrived to demand audience."

"Bid them wait," cried Pausanias, passionately.

"Hist! Pausanias," whispered the Mothon. "Is it not best to soothe them, to play with them, to cover the lion with the fox's hide?"

The regent turned with a frown to his foster-brother, as if surprised and irritated by his presumption in advising; and indeed of late, since Pausanias had admitted the son of the Helot into his guilty intrigues, Alcman had assumed a bearing and tone of equality which Pausanias, wrapped in his dark schemes, did not always notice, but at which from time to time he chafed angrily, yet again permitted it, and the custom gained ground, — for in guilt conventional distinctions rapidly vanish, and mind speaks freely out to mind. The presence of the slave, however, restrained him, and after a momentary silence his natural acuteness, great when undisturbed by passion or pride, made him sensible of the wisdom of Alcman's counsel.

"Hold!" he said to the slave. "Announce to the Grecian chiefs that Pausanias will await them forthwith, Begone.

Now, Aleman, I will talk over these gentle monitors; not in vain have I been educated in Sparta. Yet if by chance I fail, hold thyself ready to haste to Sparta at a minute's warning. I must forestall the foe. I have gold, gold; and he who employs most of the yellow orators, will prevail most with the ephors. Give me my staff, and tarry in yon chamber to the left."

CHAPTER II.

IN a large hall, with a marble fountain in the middle of it, the Greek captains awaited the coming of Pausanias. A low and muttered conversation was carried on amongst them, in small knots and groups, amidst which the voice of Uliades was heard the loudest. Suddenly the hum was hushed, for footsteps were heard without. The thick curtains that at one extreme screened the door-way were drawn aside, and attended by three of the Spartan knights, amongst whom was Lysander, and by two soothsayers, who were seldom absent, in war or warlike council, from the side of the Royal Heracleid, Pausanias slowly entered the hall. So majestic, grave, and self-collected were the bearing and aspect of the Spartan general that the hereditary awe inspired by his race was once more awakened, and the angry crowd saluted him, silent and half-abashed. Although the strong passions and the daring arrogance of Pausanias did not allow him the exercise of that enduring, systematic, unsleeping hypocrisy which, in relations with the foreigner, often characterized his countrymen, and which, from its outward dignity and profound craft, exalted the vice into genius; yet, trained from earliest childhood in the arts that hide design, that control the countenance, and convey in the fewest words the most ambiguous meanings, the Spartan general could, for a brief period, or for a critical purpose, command all the wiles for which the Greek was nationally famous, and in which Thucydides believed that, of all Greeks, the Spartan was the most skilful adept. And

now, as, uniting the courtesy of the host with the dignity of the chief, he returned the salute of the officers, and smiled his gracious welcome, the unwonted affability of his manner took the discontented by surprise, and half propitiated the most indignant in his favour.

"I need not ask you, O Greeks," said he, "why ye have sought me. Ye have learned the escape of Ariamanes and Datis, — a strange and unaccountable mischance."

The captains looked round at each other in silence, till at last every eye rested upon Cimon, whose illustrious birth, as well as his known respect for Sparta, combined with his equally well-known dislike of her chief, seemed to mark him, despite his youth, as the fittest person to be speaker for the rest. Cimon, who understood the mute appeal, and whose courage never failed his ambition, raised his head, and after a moment's hesitation replied to the Spartan, —

"Pausanias, you guess rightly the cause which leads us to your presence. These prisoners were our noblest; their capture the reward of our common valour. They were generals, moreover, of high skill and repute; they had become experienced in our Grecian warfare, even by their defeats. Those two men, should Xerxes again invade Greece, are worth more to his service than half the nations whose myriads crossed the Hellespont. But this is not all. The arms of the Barbarians we can encounter undismayed; it is treason at home which can alone appall us."

There was a low murmur among the Ionians at these words. Pausanias, with well-dissembled surprise on his countenance, turned his eyes from Cimon to the murmurers, and from them again to Cimon, and repeated, —

"Treason, son of Miltiades? and from whom?"

"Such is the question that we would put to thee, Pausanias, — to thee, whose eyes, as leader of our armies, are doubtless vigilant daily and nightly over the interests of Greece."

"I am not blind," returned Pausanias, appearing unconscious of the irony, "but I am not Argus. If thou hast discovered aught that is hidden from me, speak boldly."

"Thou hast made Gongylus, the Eretrian, governor of

Byzantium; for what great services we know not. But he has lived much in Persia."

"For that reason, on this the frontier of her domains, he is better enabled to penetrate her designs and counteract her ambition."

"This Gongylus," continued Cimon, "is well known to have much frequented the Persian captives in their confinement."

"In order to learn from them what may yet be the strength of the king. In this he had my commands."

"I question it not. But, Pausanias," continued Cimon, raising his voice, and with energy, "had he also thy commands to leave thy galley last night and to return to the citadel?"

"He had. What then?"

"And on his return the Persians disappear, — a singular chance, truly. But that is not all. Last night, before he returned to the citadel, Gongylus was perceived alone in a retired spot on the outskirts of the city."

"Alone?" echoed Pausanias.

"Alone. If he had companions, they were not discerned. This spot was out of the path he should have taken. By this spot, on the soft soil, are the marks of hoofs, and in the thicket close by were found these witnesses," and Cimon drew from his vest a handful of the pearls only worn by the Eastern captives.

"There is something in this," said Xanthippus, "which requires at least examination. May it please you, Pausanias, to summon Gongylus hither?"

A momentary shade passed over the brow of the conspirator; but the eyes of the Greeks were on him, and to refuse were as dangerous as to comply. He turned to one of his Spartans, and ordered him to summon the Eretrian.

"You have spoken well, Xanthippus. This matter must be sifted."

With that, motioning the captains to the seats that were ranged round the walls and before a long table, he cast himself into a large chair at the head of the table, and waited in silent anxiety the entrance of the Eretrian. His whole trust

now was in the craft and penetration of his friend. If the courage or the cunning of Gongylus failed him; if but a word betrayed him, — Pausanias was lost. He was girt by men who hated him; and he read in the dark, fierce eyes of the Ionians — whose pride he had so often galled, whose revenge he had so carelessly provoked — the certainty of ruin. One hand, hidden within the folds of his robe, convulsively clinched the flesh, in the stern agony of his suspense. His calm and composed face nevertheless exhibited to the captains no trace of fear.

The draperies were again drawn aside, and Gongylus slowly entered.

Habituated to peril of every kind from his earliest youth, the Eretrian was quick to detect its presence. The sight of the silent Greeks, formally seated round the hall, and watching his steps and countenance with eyes whose jealous and vindictive meaning it required no *Œdipus* to read, the grave and half-averted brow of Pausanias, and the angry excitement that had prevailed amidst the host at the news of the escape of the Persians, — all sufficed to apprise him of the nature of the council to which he had been summoned.

Supporting himself on his staff, and dragging his limbs tardily along, he had leisure to examine, though with apparent indifference, the whole group; and when, with a calm salutation, he arrested his steps at the foot of the table immediately facing Pausanias, he darted one glance at the Spartan so fearless, so bright, so cheering that Pausanias breathed hard, as if a load were thrown from his breast, and turning easily towards Cimon, said, —

“Behold your witness. Which of us shall be questioner, and which judge?”

“That matters but little,” returned Cimon. “Before this audience justice must force its way.”

“It rests with you, Pausanias,” said Xanthippus, “to acquaint the governor of Byzantium with the suspicions he has excited.”

“Gongylus,” said Pausanias, “the captive Barbarians, Ariamanes and Datis, were placed by me especially under

thy vigilance and guard. Thou knowest that while (for humanity becomes the victor) I ordered thee to vex them by no undue restraints, I nevertheless commanded thee to consider thy life itself answerable for their durance. They have escaped. The captains of Greece demand of thee, as I demanded, by what means, by what connivance? Speak the truth, and deem that in falsehood, as well as in treachery, detection is easy, and death certain."

The tone of Pausanias and his severe look pleased and reassured all the Greeks, except the wiser Cimon, who, though his suspicions were a little shaken, continued to fix his eyes rather on Pausanias than on the Eretrian.

"Pausanias," replied Gongylus, drawing up his lean frame, as with the dignity of conscious innocence, "that suspicion could fall upon me, I find it difficult to suppose. Raised by thy favour to the command of Byzantium, what have I to gain by treason or neglect? These Persians, I knew them well. I had known them in Susa, — known them when I served Darius, being then an exile from Eretria. Ye know, my countrymen, that when Darius invaded Greece, I left his court and armies, and sought my native land, to fall or to conquer in its cause. Well, then, I knew these Barbarians. I sought them frequently, — partly, it may be, to return to them in their adversity the courtesies shown me in mine: ye are Greeks, — ye will not condemn me for humanity and gratitude; partly with another motive: I knew that Ariamanes had the greatest influence over Xerxes; I knew that the Great King would at any cost seek to regain the liberty of his friend. I urged upon Ariamanes the wisdom of a peace with the Greeks even on their own terms; I told him that when Xerxes sent to offer the ransom, conditions of peace would avail more than sacks of gold. He listened and approved. Did I wrong in this, Pausanias? No; for thou, whose deep sagacity has made thee condescend even to appear half Persian, because thou art all Greek, — thou thyself didst sanction my efforts on behalf of Greece."

Pausanias looked with a silent triumph round the conclave, and Xanthippus nodded approval.

"In order to conciliate them, and with too great confidence in their faith, I relaxed by degrees the rigour of their confinement. That was a fault; I own it. Their apartments communicated with a court in which I suffered them to walk at will. But I placed there two sentinels in whom I deemed I could repose all trust, — not my own countrymen, not Eretrians; not thy Spartans or Laconians, Pausanias. No; I deemed that if ever the jealousy (a laudable jealousy) of the Greeks should demand an account of my faith and vigilance, my witnesses should be the countrymen of those who have ever the most suspected me. Those sentinels were, the one a Samian, the other a Plataean. These men have betrayed me and Greece. Last night, on returning hither from the vessel, I visited the Persians. They were about to retire to rest, and I quitted them soon, suspecting nothing. This morning they had fled, and with them their abettors, the sentinels. I hastened, first, to send soldiers in search of them, and, secondly, to inform Pausanias in his galley. If I have erred, I submit me to your punishment. Punish my error, but acquit my honesty."

"And what," said Cimon, abruptly, "led thee far from thy path, between the Heracleid's galley and the citadel, to the fields near the temple of Aphrodite, between the citadel and the bay? Thy colour changes. Mark him, Greeks! Quick; thine answer!"

The countenance of Gongylus had, indeed, lost its colour and hardihood. The loud tone of Cimon, the effect his confusion produced on the Greeks, some of whom, the Ionians, less self-possessed and dignified than the rest, half rose, with fierce gestures and muttered exclamations, — served still more to embarrass and intimidate him. He cast a hasty look on Pausanias, who averted his eyes. There was a pause. The Spartan gave himself up for lost; but how much more was his fear increased when Gongylus, casting an imploring gaze upon the Greeks, said hesitatingly, —

"Question me no further; I dare not speak;" and as he spoke, he pointed to Pausanias.

"It was the dread of thy resentment, Pausanias," said

Cimon, coldly, "that withheld his confession. Vouchsafe to reassure him."

"Eretrian," said Pausanias, striking his clenched hand on the table, "I know not what tale trembles on thy lips; but be it what it may, give it voice, I command thee."

"Thou thyself, thou wert the cause that led me towards the temple of Aphrodite," said Gongylus, in a low voice.

At these words there went forth a general deep-breathed murmur. With one accord every Greek rose to his feet. The Spartan attendants in the rear of Pausanias drew closer to his person; but there was nothing in their faces — yet more dark and vindictive than those of the other Greeks — that promised protection. Pausanias alone remained seated and unmoved. His imminent danger gave him back all his valour, all his pride, all his passionate and profound disdain. With unbleached cheek, with haughty eyes, he met the gaze of the assembly; and then, waving his hand as if that gesture sufficed to restrain and awe them, he said, —

"In the name of all Greece, whose chief I yet am, whose protector I have once been, I command you to resume your seats and listen to the Eretrian. Spartans, fall back. Governor of Byzantium, pursue your tale."

"Yes, Pausanias," resumed Gongylus, "you alone were the cause that drew me from my rest. I would fain be silent, but —"

"Say on," cried Pausanias, fiercely, and measuring the space between himself and Gongylus, in doubt whether the Eretrian's head were within reach of his cimeter, — so, at least, Gongylus interpreted that freezing look of despair and vengeance, and he drew back some paces. "I place myself, O Greeks, under your protection; it is dangerous to reveal the errors of the great. Know that, as governor of Byzantium, many things ye wot not of reach my ears. Hence, I guard against dangers while ye sleep. Learn, then, that Pausanias is not without the weakness of his ancestor, Alcides, — he loves a maiden, a Byzantine, Cleonice, the daughter of Diagoras."

This unexpected announcement, made in so grave a tone,

provoked a smile amongst the gay Ionians; but an exclamation of jealous anger broke from Antagoras, and a blush, partly of wounded pride, partly of warlike shame, crimsoned the swarthy cheek of Pausanias. Cimon, who was by no means free from the joyous infirmities of youth, relaxed his severe brow, and said, after a short pause,—

“Is it, then, among the grave duties of the governor of Byzantium to watch over the fair Cleonice, or to aid the suit of her illustrious lover?”

“Not so,” answered Gongylus; “but the life of the Grecian general is dear at least to the grateful governor of Byzantium. Greeks, ye know that amongst you Pausanias has many foes. Returning last night from his presence, and passing through the thicket, I overheard voices at hand. I caught the name of Pausanias. ‘The Spartan,’ said one voice, ‘nightly visits the house of Diagoras. He goes usually alone. From the height near the temple we can watch well, for the night is clear; if he goes alone, we can intercept his way on his return.’ ‘To the height!’ cried the other. I thought to distinguish the voices, but the trees hid the speakers. I followed the footsteps towards the temple, for it behooved me to learn who thus menaced the chief of Greece. But ye know that the wood reaches even to the sacred building, and the steps gained the temple before I could recognize the men. I concealed myself, as I thought, to watch; but it seems that I was perceived, for he who saw me, and now accuses, was doubtless one of the assassins. Happy I, if the sight of a witness scared him from the crime. Either fearing detection, or aware that their intent that night was frustrated, — for Pausanias, visiting Cleonice earlier than his wont, had already resought his galley, — the men retreated as they came, unseen, not unheard. I caught their receding steps through the brushwood. Greeks, I have said. Who is my accuser? In him behold the would-be murderer of Pausanias!”

“Liar!” cried an indignant and loud voice amongst the captains; and Antagoras stood forth from the circle.

“It is I who saw thee. Darest thou accuse Antagoras of Chios?”

"What at that hour brought Antagoras of Chios to the temple of Aphrodite?" retorted Gongylus.

The eyes of the Greeks turned towards the young captain, and there was confusion on his face. But recovering himself quickly, the Chian answered: "Why should I blush to own it? Aphrodite is no dishonourable deity to the men of the Ionian isles. I sought the temple at that hour, as is our wont, to make my offering and record my prayer."

"Certainly," said Cimon. "We must own that Aphrodite is powerful at Byzantium. Who can acquit Pausanias and blame Antagoras?"

"Pardon me, one question," said Gongylus. "Is not the female heart which Antagoras would beseech the goddess to soften towards him that of the Cleonice of whom we spoke? See, he denies it not. Greeks, the Chians are warm lovers, and warm lovers are revengeful rivals."

This artful speech had its instantaneous effect amongst the younger and more unthinking loiterers. Those who at once would have disbelieved the imputed guilt of Antagoras upon motives merely political, inclined to a suggestion that ascribed it to the jealousy of a lover. And his character, ardent and fiery, rendered the suspicion yet more plausible. Meanwhile the minds of the audience had been craftily drawn from the grave and main object of the meeting, — the flight of the Persians, — and a lighter and livelier curiosity had supplanted the eager and dark resentment which had hitherto animated the circle. Pausanias, with the subtle genius that belonged to him, hastened to seize advantage of this momentary diversion in his favour, and before the Chian could recover his consternation, both at the charge and the evident effect it had produced upon a part of the assembly, the Spartan stretched his hand and spake.

"Greeks, Pausanias listens to no tale of danger to himself. Willingly he believes that Gongylus either misinterpreted the intent of some jealous and heated threats, or that the words he overheard were not uttered by Antagoras. Possible is it, too, that others may have sought the temple with less gentle desires than our Chian ally. Let this pass. Unworthy such

matters of the councils of bearded men; too much reference has been made to those follies which our idleness has given birth to. Let no fair Briseis renew strife amongst chiefs and soldiers. Excuse not thyself, Antagoras; we dismiss all charge against thee. On the other hand, Gongylus will doubtless seem to you to have accounted for his appearance near the precincts of the temple. And it is but a coincidence, natural enough, that the Persian prisoners should have chosen, later in the night, the same spot for the steeds to await them. The thickness of the wood round the temple, and the direction of the place towards the east, points out the neighbourhood as the very one in which the fugitives would appoint the horses. Waste no further time, but provide at once for the pursuit. To you, Cimon, be this care confided. Already have I despatched fifty light-armed men on fleet Thessalian steeds. You, Cimon, increase the number of the pursuers. The prisoners may be yet recaptured. Doth aught else remain worthy of our ears? If so, speak; if not, depart."

"Pausanias," said Antagoras, firmly, "let Gongylus retract, or not, his charge against me, I retain mine against Gongylus. Wholly false is it that in word or deed I plotted violence against thee, though of much — not as Cleonice's lover, but as Grecian captain — I have good reason to complain. Wholly false is it that I had a comrade. I was alone. And coming out from the temple, where I had hung my chaplet, I perceived Gongylus clearly under the starlit skies. He stood in listening attitude close by the sacred myrtle-grove. I hastened towards him, but methinks he saw me not; he turned slowly, penetrated the wood, and vanished. I gained the spot on the soft sward which the dripping boughs make ever humid. I saw the print of hoofs. Within the thicket I found the pearls that Cimon has displayed to you. Clear, then, is it that this man lies; clear that the Persians must have fled already, — although Gongylus declares that on his return to the citadel he visited them in their prison. Explain this, Eretrian!"

"He who would speak false witness," answered Gongylus, with a firmness equal to the Chian's, "can find pearls at what-

soever hour he pleases. Greeks, this man presses me to renew the charge which Pausanias generously sought to stifle. I have said. And I, governor of Byzantium, call on the Council of the Grecian leaders to maintain my authority, and protect their own chief."

Then arose a vexed and perturbed murmur, most of the Ionians siding with Antagoras; such of the allies as yet clung to the Dorian ascendancy grouping round Gongylus.

The persistence of Antagoras had made the dilemma of no slight embarrassment to Pausanias. Something lofty in his original nature urged him to shrink from supporting Gongylus in an accusation which he believed untrue. On the other hand, he could not abandon his accomplice in an effort, as dangerous as it was crafty, to conceal their common guilt.

"Son of Miltiades," he said after a brief pause, in which his dexterous resolution was formed, "I invoke your aid to appease a contest in which I foresee no result but that of schism amongst ourselves. Antagoras has no witness to support his tale, Gongylus none to support his own. Who shall decide between conflicting testimonies which rest but on the lips of accuser and accused? Hereafter, if the matter be deemed sufficiently grave, let us refer the decision to the oracle that never errs. Time and chance meanwhile may favour us in clearing up the darkness we cannot now penetrate. For you, governor of Byzantium, it behooves me to say that the escape of prisoners intrusted to your charge justifies vigilance, if not suspicion. We shall consult at our leisure whether or not that course suffices to remove you from the government of Byzantium. Heralds, advance; our council is dissolved."

With these words Pausanias rose; and the majesty of his bearing, with the unwonted temper and conciliation of his language, so came in aid of his high office that no man ventured a dissentient murmur.

The conclave broke up, and not till its members had gained the outer air did any signs of suspicion or dissatisfaction evince themselves; but then, gathering in groups, the Ionians with especial jealousy discussed what had passed, and with

their native shrewdness ascribed the moderation of Pausanias to his desire to screen Gongylus and avoid further inquisition into the flight of the prisoners. The discontented looked round for Cimon; but the young Athenian had hastily retired from the throng, and after issuing orders to pursue the fugitives, sought Aristides in the house near the quay in which he lodged.

Cimon related to his friend what had passed at the meeting, and terminating his recital, said, —

“Thou shouldst have been with us. With thee we might have ventured more.”

“And if so,” returned the wise Athenian, with a smile, “ye would have prospered less. Precisely because I would not commit our country to the suspicion of fomenting intrigues and mutiny to her own advantage, did I abstain from the assembly, well aware that Pausanias would bring his minion harmless from the unsupported accusation of Antagoras. Thou hast acted with cool judgment, Cimon. The Spartan is weaving the webs of the *Parcæ* for his own feet. Leave him to weave on, undisturbed. The hour in which Athens shall assume the sovereignty of the seas is drawing near. Let it come, like Jove’s thunder, in a calm sky.”

CHAPTER III.

PAUSANIAS did not that night quit the city. After the meeting, he held a private conference with the Spartan Equals, whom custom and the government assigned, in appearance as his attendants, in reality as witnesses, if not spies, of his conduct. Though every pure Spartan, as compared with the subject Laconian population, was noble, the republic acknowledged two main distinctions in class, — the higher, entitled Equals, — (a word which we might not inaptly and more intelligibly render Peers); the lower, Inferiors.

These distinctions, though hereditary, were not immutable. The peer could be degraded; the inferior could become a peer. To the royal person in war three peers were allotted. Those assigned to Pausanias, of the tribe called the Hylleans, were naturally of a rank and influence that constrained him to treat them with a certain deference, which perpetually chafed his pride and confirmed his discontent; for these three men were precisely of the mould which at heart he most despised. Polydorus, the first in rank, — for, like Pausanias, he boasted his descent from Hercules, — was the personification of the rudeness and bigotry of a Spartan who had never before stirred from his rocky home, and who disdained all that he could not comprehend. Gelon, the second, passed for a very wise man, for he seldom spoke but in monosyllables; yet probably his words were as numerous as his ideas. Cleomenes, the third, was as distasteful to the regent from his merits as the others from their deficiencies. He had risen from the grade of the Inferiors by his valour; blunt, homely, frank, sincere, he never disguised his displeasure at the manner of Pausanias, though, a true Spartan in discipline, he never transgressed the respect which his chief commanded in time of war.

Pausanias knew that these officers were in correspondence with Sparta, and he now exerted all his powers to remove from their minds any suspicion which the disappearance of the prisoners might have left in them.

In this interview he displayed all those great natural powers which, rightly trained and guided, might have made him not less great in council than in war. With masterly precision he enlarged on the growing ambition of Athens, on the disposition in her favour evinced by all the Ionian confederates. "Hitherto," he said truly, "Sparta has uniformly held rank as the first State of Greece; the leadership of the Greeks belongs to us by birth and renown. But see you not that the war is now shifting from land to sea? Sea is not our element; it is that of Athens, of all the Ionian race. If this continue, we lose our ascendancy, and Athens becomes the sovereign of Hellas. Beneath the calm of Aristides I detect

his deep design. In vain Cimon affects the manner of the Spartan; at heart he is Athenian. This charge against Gongylus is aimed at me. Grant that the plot which it conceals succeed; grant that Sparta share the affected suspicions of the Ionians, and recall me from Byzantium: deem you that there lives one Spartan who could delay for a day the supremacy of Athens? Nought save the respect the Dorian Greeks at least attach to the general at Plataea could restrain the secret ambition of the city of the demagogues. Deem not that I have been as rash and vain as some hold me for the stern visage I have shown to the Ionians. Trust me that it was necessary to awe them, with a view to maintain our majesty. For Sparta to preserve her ascendancy, two things are needful, — first, to continue the war by land; secondly, to disgust the Ionians with their sojourn here, send them with their ships to their own havens, and so leave Hellas under the sole guardianship of ourselves and our Peloponnesian allies. Therefore, I say, bear with me in this double design; chide me not if my haughty manner disperse these subtle Ionians. If I bore with them to-day, it was less from respect than — shall I say it? — my fear lest you should misinterpret me. Beware how you detail to Sparta whatever might rouse the jealousy of her government. Trust to me, and I will extend the dominion of Sparta till it grasp the whole of Greece. We will depose everywhere the revolutionary Demos, and establish our own oligarchies in every Grecian State; we will Laconize all Hellas."

Much of what Pausanias said was wise and profound. Such statesmanship, narrow and congenial, but vigorous and crafty, Sparta taught in later years to her alert politicians. And we have already seen that, despite the dazzling prospects of Oriental dominion, he as yet had separated himself rather from the laws than the interests of Sparta, and still incorporated his own ambition with the extension of the sovereignty of his country over the rest of Greece.

But the peers heard him in dull and gloomy silence; and not till he had paused and thrice asked for a reply, did Polydorus speak.

"You would increase the dominion of Sparta, Pausanias. Increase of dominion is waste of life and treasure. We have few men, little gold; Sparta is content to hold her own."

"Good," said Gelon, with impassive countenance. "What care we who leads the Greeks into blows? The fewer blows the better. Brave men fight if they must; wise men never fight if they can help it."

"And such is your counsel, Cleomenes?" asked Pausanias, with a quivering lip.

"Not from the same reasons," answered the nobler and more generous Spartan. "I presume not to question your motives, Pausanias. I leave you to explain them to the ephors and the Gerusia. But since you press me, this I say. First, all the Greeks, Ionian as well as Dorian, fought equally against the Mede, and from the commander of the Greeks all should receive fellowship and courtesy. Secondly, I say if Athens is better fitted than Sparta for the maritime ascendancy, let Athens rule, so that Hellas be saved from the Mede. Thirdly, O Pausanias, I pray that Sparta may rest satisfied with her own institutions, and not disturb the peace of Greece by forcing them upon other States, and thereby enslaving Hellas. What more could the Persian do? Finally, my advice is to suspend Gongylus from his office; to conciliate the Ionians; to remain as a Grecian armament firm and united, and so procure, on better terms, peace with Persia. And then let each State retire within itself, and none aspire to rule the other. A thousand free cities are better guard against the Barbarian than a single State made up of republics overthrown, and resting its strength upon hearts enslaved."

"Do you, too," said Pausanias, gnawing his nether lip, "do you, too, Polydorus,—you too, Gelon,—agree with Cleomenes that if Athens is better fitted than Sparta for the sovereignty of the seas, we should yield to that restless rival so perilous a power?"

"Ships cost gold," said Polydorus; "Spartans have none to spare. Mariners require skilful captains; Spartans know nothing of the sea."

"Moreover," quoth Gelon, "the ocean is a terrible element. What can valour do against a storm? We may lose more men by adverse weather than a century can repair. Let who will have the seas; Sparta has her rocks and defiles."

"Men and peers," said Pausanias, ill repressing his scorn, "ye little dream what arms ye place in the hands of the Athenians. I have done. Take only this prophecy. You are now the head of Greece. You surrender your sceptre to Athens, and become a second-rate power."

"Never second-rate when Greece shall demand armed men," said Cleomenes, proudly.

"Armed men, armed men!" cried the more profound Pausanias. "Do you suppose that commerce, that trade, that maritime energy, that fleets which ransack the shores of the world, will not obtain a power greater than mere brute-like valour? But as ye will, as ye will."

"As we speak, our forefathers thought," said Gelon.

"And, Pausanias," said Cleomenes, gravely, "as we speak, so think the ephors."

Pausanias fixed his dark eye on Cleomenes, and after a brief pause, saluted the Equals and withdrew. "Sparta," he muttered as he regained his chamber, "Sparta, thou refuseth to be great; but greatness is necessary to thy son. Ah, their iron laws would constrain my soul; but it shall wear them as a warrior wears his armour and adapts it to his body. Thou shalt be queen of all Hellas, despite thyself, thine ephors, and thy laws. Then only will I forgive thee."

CHAPTER IV.

DIAGORAS was sitting outside his door and giving various instructions to the slaves employed on his farm, when, through an arcade thickly covered with the vine, the light form of Antagoras came slowly in sight.

"Hail to thee, Diagoras," said the Chian; "thou art the only wise man I meet with. Thou art tranquil while all else are disturbed; and, worshipping the great Mother, thou carest nought, methinks, for the Persian who invades, or the Spartan who professes to defend."

"Tut!" said Diagoras, in a whisper, "thou knowest the contrary, — thou knowest that if the Persian comes, I am ruined; and, by the gods, I am on a bed of thorns as long as the Spartan stays."

"Dismiss thy slaves," exclaimed Antagoras, in the same undertone; "I would speak with thee on grave matters that concern us both."

After hastily finishing his instructions and dismissing his slaves, Diagoras turned to the impatient Chian and said, —

"Now, young warrior, I am all ears for thy speech."

"Truly," said Antagoras, "if thou wert aware of what I am about to utter, thou wouldst not have postponed consideration for thy daughter to thy care for a few jars of beggarly olives."

"Hem!" said Diagoras, peevishly. "Olives are not to be despised: oil to the limbs makes them supple; to the stomach it gives gladness. Oil, moreover, bringeth money when sold. But a daughter is the plague of a man's life. First, one has to keep away lovers; and next to find a husband; and when all is done, one has to put one's hand in one's chest, and pay a tall fellow like thee for robbing one of one's own child. That custom of dowries is abominable. In the good old times a bridegroom, as was meet and proper, paid for his bride; now we poor fathers pay him for taking her. Well, well, never bite thy forefinger and curl up thy brows. What thou hast to say, say."

"Diagoras, I know that thy heart is better than thy speech, and that, much as thou covetest money, thou lovest thy child more. Know, then, that Pausanias — a curse light on him! — brings shame upon Cleonice. Know that already her name hath grown the talk of the camp. Know that his visit to her the night before last was proclaimed in the Council of the Captains as a theme for jest and rude laughter. By the head

of Zeus, how thinkest thou to profit by the stealthy wooings of this black-browed Spartan? Knowest thou not that his laws forbid him to marry Cleonice? Wouldst thou have him dishonour her? Speak out to him as thou speakest to men, and tell him that the maidens of Byzantium are not in the control of the general of the Greeks."

"Youth, youth," cried Diagoras, greatly agitated, "wouldst thou bring my gray hairs to a bloody grave? Wouldst thou see my daughter reft from me by force, and —"

"How darest thou speak thus, old man?" interrupted the indignant Chian. "If Pausanias wronged a virgin, all Hellas would rise against him."

"Yes, but not till the ill were done, till my throat were cut, and my child dishonoured. Listen. At first, indeed, when, as ill-luck would have it, Pausanias, lodging a few days under my roof, saw and admired Cleonice, I did venture to remonstrate; and how think you he took it? 'Never,' quoth he, with his stern, quivering lip, 'never did conquest forego its best right to the smiles of beauty. The legends of Hercules, my ancestor, tell thee that to him who labours for men, the gods grant the love of women. Fear not that I should wrong thy daughter; to woo her is not to wrong. But close thy door on me, immure Cleonice from my sight, and nor armed slaves, nor bolts, nor bars shall keep love from the loved one.' Therewith he turned on his heel and left me. But the next day came a Lydian in his train, with a goodly pannier of rich stuffs and a short Spartan sword. On the pannier was written 'Friendship,' on the sword 'Wrath;' and Alcman gave me a scrap of parchment, whereon, with the cursed brief wit of a Spartan, was inscribed 'Choose!' Who could doubt which to take? Who, by the Gods, would prefer three inches of Spartan iron in his stomach to a basketful of rich stuffs for his shoulders? Wherefore, from that hour, Pausanias comes as he lists. But Cleonice humours him not, let tongues wag as they may. Easier to take three cities than that child's heart."

"Is it so indeed?" exclaimed the Chian, joyfully; "Cleonice loves him not?"

"Laughs at him to his beard, — that is, would laugh if he wore one."

"Oh, Diagoras," cried Antagoras, "hear me, hear me. I need not remind thee that our families are united by the hospitable ties; that amongst thy treasures thou wilt find the gifts of my ancestors for five generations; that when, a year since, my affairs brought me to Byzantium, I came to thee with the symbols of my right to claim thy hospitable cares. On leaving thee we broke the sacred die. I have one half, thou the other. In that visit I saw and loved Cleonice. Fain would I have told my love, but then my father lived, and I feared lest he should oppose my suit; therefore, as became me, I was silent. On my return home, my fears were confirmed; my father desired that I, a Chian, should wed a Chian. Since I have been with the fleet, news has reached me that the urn holds my father's ashes." Here the young Chian paused. "Alas, alas!" he murmured, smiting his breast, "and I was not at hand to fix over thy doors the sacred branch, to give thee the parting kiss, and receive into my lips thy latest breath. May Hermes, O father, have led thee to pleasant groves!"

Diagoras, who had listened attentively to the young Chian, was touched by his grief, and said pityingly, —

"I know thou art a good son, and thy father was a worthy man, though harsh. It is a comfort to think that all does not die with the dead. His money at least survives him."

"But," resumed Antagoras, not heeding this consolation, — "but now I am free; and ere this, so soon as my mourning garment had been laid aside, I had asked thee to bless me with Cleonice, but that I feared her love was gone, — gone to the haughty Spartan. Thou reassurest me; and in so doing, thou confirmest the fair omens with which Aphrodite has received my offerings. Therefore I speak out. No dowry ask I with Cleonice, save such, more in name than amount, as may distinguish the wife from the concubine, and assure her an honoured place amongst my kinsmen. Thou knowest I am rich; thou knowest that my birth dates from the oldest citizens of Chios. Give me thy child, and deliver her thyself

at once from the Spartan's power. Once mine, all the fleets of Hellas are her protection, and our marriage-torches are the swords of a Grecian army. O Diagoras, I clasp thy knees; put thy right hand in mine. Give me thy child as wife!"

The Byzantine was strongly affected. The suitor was one who, in birth and possessions, was all that he could desire for his daughter; and at Byzantium there did not exist that feeling against intermarriages with the foreigner which prevailed in towns more purely Greek, though in many of them, too, that antique prejudice had worn away. On the other hand, by transferring to Antagoras his anxious charge, he felt that he should take the best course to preserve it untarnished from the fierce love of Pausanias; and there was truth in the Chian's suggestion. The daughter of a Byzantine might be unprotected; the wife of an Ionian captain was safe even from the power of Pausanias. As these reflections occurred to him, he placed his right hand in the Chian's, and said, —

"Be it as thou wilt; I consent to betroth thee to Cleonice. Follow me; thou art free to woo her."

So saying, he rose, and as if in fear of his own second thoughts, he traversed the hall with hasty strides to the interior of the mansion. He ascended a flight of steps, and drawing aside a curtain suspended between two columns, Antagoras, who followed timidly behind, beheld Cleonice.

As was the wont in the domestic life of all Grecian States, her handmaids were around the noble virgin. Two were engaged on embroidery, one in spinning; a fourth was reading aloud to Cleonice, — and that at least was a rare diversion to women, for few had the education of the fair Byzantine. Cleonice herself was half reclined upon a bench inlaid with ivory and covered with cushions; before her stood a small tripod table on which she leaned the arm, the hand of which supported her cheek, and she seemed listening to the lecture of the slave with earnest and absorbed attention, — so earnest, so absorbed, that she did not for some moments perceive the entrance of Diagoras and the Chian.

"Child," said the former, — and Cleonice started to her feet and stood modestly before her father, her eyes downcast,

her arms crossed upon her bosom, — “child, I bid thee welcome my guest-friend, Antagoras of Chios. Slaves, ye may withdraw.”

Cleonice bowed her head; and an unquiet, anxious change came over her countenance.

As soon as the slaves were gone, Diagoras resumed, —

“Daughter, I present to thee a suitor for thy hand; receive him as I have done, and he shall have my leave to carve thy name on every tree in the garden, with the lover’s epithet of ‘Beautiful’ attached to it. Antagoras, look up, then, and speak for thyself.”

But Antagoras was silent, and a fear unknown to his frank, hardy nature came over him. With an arch smile, Diagoras, deeming his presence no longer necessary or expedient, lifted the curtain, and lover and maid were left alone.

Then with an effort, and still with hesitating accents, the Chian spoke, —

“Fair virgin, not in the groves of Byzantium will thy name be first written by the hand of Antagoras. In my native Chios the myrtle-trees are already eloquent of thee. Since I first saw thee, I loved. Maiden, wilt thou be my wife?”

Thrice moved the lips of Cleonice, and thrice her voice seemed to fail her. At length she said: “Chian, thou art a stranger, and the laws of the Grecian cities dishonour the stranger whom the free citizen stoops to marry.”

“Nay,” cried Antagoras, “such cruel laws are obsolete in Chios. Nature and custom and love’s almighty goddess long since have set them aside. Fear not; the haughtiest matron of my native State will not be more honoured than the Byzantine bride of Antagoras.”

“Is it in Sparta only that such laws exist?” said Cleonice, half unconsciously; and to the sigh with which she spoke a deep blush succeeded.

“Sparta!” exclaimed Antagoras, with a fierce and jealous pang. “Ah, are thy thoughts then upon the son of Sparta? Were Pausanias a Chian, wouldst thou turn from him scornfully as thou now dost from me?”

“Not scornfully, Antagoras,” answered Cleonice (who had

indeed averted her face, at his reproachful question; but now turned it full upon him, with an expression of sad and pathetic sweetness),—"not scornfully do I turn from thee, though with pain; for what worthier homage canst thou render to woman than honourable love? Gratefully do I hearken to the suit that comes from thee; but gratitude is not the return thou wouldst ask, Antagoras. My hand is my father's; my heart, alas! is mine. Thou mayest claim from him the one; the other, neither he can give, nor thou receive."

"Say not so, Cleonice," cried the Chian; "say not that thou canst not love me, if so I am to interpret thy words. Love brings love with the young. How canst thou yet know thine own heart? Tarry till thou hast listened to mine. As the fire on the altar spreads from offering to offering, so spreads love, —its flame envelops all that are near to it. Thy heart will catch the heavenly spark from mine."

"Chian," said Cleonice, gently withdrawing the hand that he sought to clasp, "when, as my father's guest-friend, thou wert a sojourner within these walls, oft have I heard thee speak, and all thy words spoke the thoughts of a noble soul. Were it otherwise, not thus would I now address thee. Didst thou love gold, and wooed in me but the child of the rich Diagoras, or wert thou one of those who would treat for a wife as a trader for a slave, invoking Here but disdaining Aphrodite, I should bow my head to my doom. But, thou, Antagoras, askest love for love; this I cannot give thee. Spare me, O generous Chian. Let not my father enforce his right to my obedience."

"Answer me but one question," interrupted Antagoras in a low voice, though with compressed lips: "Dost thou then love another?"

The blood mounted to the virgin's cheeks; it suffused her brow, her neck, with burning blushes, and then, receding, left her face colourless as a statue. Then with tones low and constrained as his own, she pressed her hand on her heart and replied, "Thou sayest it; I love another."

"And that other is Pausanias? Alas! thy silence, thy trembling, answer me."

Antagoras groaned aloud and covered his face with his hands; but after a short pause he exclaimed, with great emotion, "No, no; say not that thou lovest Pausanias; say not that Aphrodite hath so accursed thee: for to love Pausanias is to love dishonour."

"Hold, Chian! Not so; for my love has no hope. Our hearts are not our own, but our actions are."

Antagoras gazed on her with suspense and awe; for as she spoke, her slight form dilated, her lip curled, her cheek glowed again, but with the blush less of love than of pride. In her countenance, her attitude, there was something divine and holy, such as would have beseeemed a priestess of Diana.

"Yes," she resumed, raising her eyes, and with a still and mournful sweetness in her upraised features, "what I love is not Pausanias, — it is the glory of which he is the symbol, it is the Greece of which he has been the saviour. Let him depart, as soon he must; let these eyes behold him no more: still, there exists for me all that exists now, — a name, a renown, a dream. Never for me may the nuptial hymn resound, or the marriage torch be illumined. O goddess of the silver bow, O chaste and venerable Artemis! receive, protect thy servant; and ye, O funereal gods, lead me soon, lead the virgin, unreluctant, to the shades."

A superstitious fear, a dread as if his earthly love would violate something sacred, chilled the ardour of the young Chian, and for several moments both were silent.

At length Antagoras, kissing the hem of her robe, said, —

"Maiden of Byzantium, like thee, then, I will love, though without hope. I will not, I dare not, profane thy presence by prayers which pain thee, and seem to me, having heard thee, almost guilty, as if proffered to some nymph circling in choral dance the moonlit mountain-tops of Delos. But ere I depart, and tell thy father that my suit is over, oh, place at least thy right hand in mine, and swear to me, not the bride's vow of faith and troth, but that vow which a virgin sister may pledge to a brother, mindful to protect and to avenge her. Swear to me that if this haughty Spartan, contemning alike men, laws, and the household gods, should seek to con-

strain thy purity to his will; if thou shouldst have cause to tremble at power and force, and fierce desire should demand what gentle love would but reverently implore, — then, Cleonice, seeing how little thy father can defend thee, wilt thou remember Antagoras, and through him, summon around thee all the majesty of Hellas? Grant me but this prayer, and I leave thee, if in sorrow, yet not with terror.”

“Generous and noble Chian,” returned Cleonice, as her tears fell upon the hand he extended to her, “why, why do I so ill repay thee? Thy love is indeed that which ennobles the heart that yields it, and her who shall one day recompense thee for the loss of me. Fear not the power of Pausanias; dream not that I shall need a defender, while above us reign the gods, and below us lies the grave. Yet, to appease thee, take my right hand and hear my oath. If the hour comes when I have need of man’s honour against man’s wrong, I will call on Antagoras as a brother.”

Their hands closed in each other; and not trusting himself to speech, Antagoras turned away his face and left the room.

CHAPTER V.

FOR some days an appearance at least of harmony was restored to the contending factions in the Byzantine camp.

Pausanias did not dismiss Gongylus from the government of the city, but he sent, one by one, for the more important of the Ionian complainants, listened to their grievances, and promised redress. He adopted a more popular and gracious demeanour, and seemed, with a noble grace, to submit to the policy of conciliating the allies.

But discontent arose from causes beyond his power, had he genuinely exerted it, to remove; for it was a discontent that lay in the hostility of race to race. Though the Spartan Equals had preached courtesy to the Ionians, the ordinary manner of the Spartan warriors was invariably offensive to

the vain and susceptible confederates of a more polished race. A Spartan, wherever he might be placed, unconsciously assumed superiority. The levity of an Ionian was ever displeasing to him. Out of the actual battle-field, they could have no topics in common, none which did not provoke irritation and dispute. On the other hand, most of the Ionians could ill conceal their disaffection, mingled with something of just contempt at the notorious and confessed incapacity of the Spartans for maritime affairs, while a Spartan was yet the commander of the fleet. And many of them, wearied with inaction, and anxious to return home, were willing to seize any reasonable pretext for desertion. In this last motive lay the real strength and safety of Pausanias. And to this end his previous policy of arrogance was not so idle as it had seemed to the Greeks, and appears still in the page of history. For a Spartan really anxious to preserve the pre-eminence of his country, and to prevent the sceptre of the seas passing to Athens, could have devised no plan of action more sagacious and profound than one which would disperse the Ionians and the Athenians themselves, and reduce the operations of the Grecian force to that land warfare in which the Spartan pre-eminence was equally indisputable and undisputed. And still Pausanias, even in his change of manner, plotted and intrigued and hoped for this end. Could he once sever from the encampment the Athenians and the Ionian allies, and yet remain with his own force at Byzantium until the Persian army could collect on the Phrygian frontier, the way seemed clear to his ambition. Under ordinary circumstances, in this object he might easily have succeeded. But it chanced that all his schemes were met with invincible mistrust by those in whose interest they were conceived, and on whose co-operation they depended for success. The means adopted by Pausanias in pursuit of his policy were too distasteful to the national prejudices of the Spartan government to enable him to elicit from the national ambition of that government sufficient sympathy with the object of it. The more he felt himself uncomprehended and mistrusted by his countrymen, the more personal became the character and the more unscrupulous the

course of his ambition. Unhappily for Pausanias, moreover, the circumstances which chafed his pride, also thwarted the satisfaction of his affections; and his criminal ambition was stimulated by that less guilty passion which shared with it the mastery of a singularly turbulent and impetuous soul. Not his the love of sleek, gallant, and wanton youth; it was the love of man in his mature years, but of man to whom love till then had been unknown. In that large and dark and stormy nature, all passions, once admitted, took the growth of Titans. He loved as those long lonely at heart alone can love; he loved as love the unhappy when the unfamiliar bliss of the sweet human emotion descends like dew upon the desert. To him Cleonice was a creature wholly out of the range of experience. Differing in every shade of her versatile humour from the only women he had known, the simple, sturdy, uneducated maids and matrons of Sparta, her softness enthralled him, her anger awed. In his dreams of future power, of an absolute throne and unlimited dominion, Pausanias beheld the fair Byzantine crowned by his side. Fiercely as he loved, and little as the *sentiment* of love mingled with his *passion*, he yet thought not to dishonour a victim, but to elevate a bride. What though the laws of Sparta were against such nuptials, was not the hour approaching when these laws should be trampled under his armed heel? Since the contract with the Persians, which Gongylus assured him Xerxes would joyously and promptly fulfil, Pausanias already felt, in a soul whose arrogance arose from the consciousness of powers that had not yet found their field, as if he were not the subject of Sparta, but her lord and king. In his interviews with Cleonice, his language took a tone of promise and of hope that at times lulled her fears, and communicated its sanguine colourings of the future to her own dreams. With the elasticity of youth, her spirits rose from the solemn despondency with which she had replied to the reproaches of Antagoras; for though Pausanias spoke not openly of his schemes, though his words were mysterious, and his replies to her questions ambiguous and equivocal, still it seemed to her, seeing in him the hero of all Hellas, so natural that he

could make the laws of Sparta yield to the weight of his authority, or relax in homage to his renown, that she indulged the belief that his influence would set aside the iron customs of his country. Was it too extravagant a reward to the conqueror of the Mede to suffer him to select at least the partner of his hearth? No, Hope was not dead in that young breast. Still might she be the bride of him whose glory had dazzled her noble and sensitive nature, till the faults that darkened it were lost in the blaze. Thus insensibly to herself her tones became softer to her stern lover, and her heart betrayed itself more in her gentle looks. Yet again were there times when doubt and alarm returned with more than their earlier force, — times when, wrapped in his lurid and absorbing ambition, Pausanias escaped from his usual suppressed reserve; times when she recalled that night in which she had witnessed his interview with the strangers of the East, and had trembled lest the altar should be kindled upon the ruins of his fame. For Cleonice was wholly, ardently, sublimely Greek, — filled in each crevice of her soul with its lovely poetry, its beautiful superstition, its heroic freedom. As Greek, she had loved Pausanias, seeing in him the lofty incarnation of Greece itself. The descendant of the demigod, the champion of Plataea, the saviour of Hellas, — theme for song till song should be no more, — these attributes were what she beheld and loved; and not to have reigned by his side over a world would she have welcomed one object of that evil ambition which renounced the loyalty of a Greek for the supremacy of a king.

Meanwhile, though Antagoras had, with no mean degree of generosity, relinquished his suit to Cleonice, he detected with a jealous vigilance the continued visits of Pausanias, and burned with increasing hatred against his favoured and powerful rival. Though, in common with all the Greeks out of the Peloponnesus, he was very imperfectly acquainted with the Spartan constitution, he could not be blinded, like Cleonice, into the belief that a law so fundamental in Sparta, and so general in all the primitive States of Greece, as that which forbade intermarriage with a foreigner, could be can-

celled for the regent of Sparta and in favour of an obscure maiden of Byzantium. Every visit Pausanias paid to Cleonice but served, in his eyes, as a prelude to her ultimate dishonour. He lent himself, therefore, with all the zeal of his vivacious and ardent character to the design of removing Pausanias himself from Byzantium. He plotted with the implacable Uliades and the other Ionian captains to send to Sparta a formal mission stating their grievances against the regent, and urging his recall. But the altered manner of Pausanias deprived them of their just pretext; and the Ionians, more and more under the influence of the Athenian chief, were disinclined to so extreme a measure without the consent of Aristides and Cimon. These two chiefs were not passive spectators of affairs so critical to their ambition for Athens; they penetrated into the motives of Pausanias in the novel courtesy of demeanour that he adopted, and they foresaw that if he could succeed in wearing away the patience of the allies and dispersing the fleet, yet without giving occasion for his own recall, the golden opportunity of securing to Athens the maritime ascendancy would be lost. They resolved, therefore, to make the occasion which the wiles of the regent had delayed; and towards this object Antagoras, moved by his own jealous hate against Pausanias, worked incessantly. Fearless and vigilant, he was ever on the watch for some new charge against the Spartan chief, ever relentless in stimulating suspicion, aggravating discontent, inflaming the fierce, and arguing with the timid. His less exalted station allowed him to mix more familiarly with the various Ionian officers than would have become the high-born Cimon and the dignified repute of Aristides. Seeking to distract his mind from the haunting thought of Cleonice, he flung himself, with the ardour of his Greek temperament, into the social pleasures which took a zest from the design that he carried into them all. In the banquets, in the sports, he was ever seeking to increase the enemies of his rival; and where he charmed a gay companion, there he often enlisted a bold conspirator.

Pausanias, the unconscious or the careless object of the

Ionian's jealous hate, could not resist the fatal charm of Cleonice's presence; and if it sometimes exasperated the more evil elements of his nature, at other times it so lulled them to rest, that had the Fates given him the rightful claim to that single treasure, not one guilty thought might have disturbed the majesty of a soul which, though undisciplined and uncultured, owed half its turbulence and half its rebellious pride to its baffled yearnings for human affection and natural joy. And Cleonice, unable to shun the visits which her weak and covetous father, despite his promised favour to the suit of Antagoras, still encouraged, and feeling her honour at least, if not her peace, was secured by that ascendancy which, with each successive interview between them, her character more and more asserted over the Spartan's higher nature, relinquished the tormenting levity of tone whereby she had once sought to elude his earnestness, or conceal her own sentiments. An interest in a fate so solemn, — an interest far deeper than mere human love, — stole into her heart and elevated its instincts. She recognized the immense compassion which was due to the man so desolate at the head of armaments, so dark in the midst of glory. Centuries roll, customs change; but ever since the time of the earliest mother, woman yearns to be the soother.

CHAPTER VI.

It was the hour of the day when, between the two principal meals of the Greeks, men surrendered themselves to idleness or pleasure; when groups formed in the market-place, or crowded the barber's shops to gossip and talk of news; when the tale-teller or ballad-singer collected round him on the quays his credulous audience; when on playgrounds that stretched behind the taverns or without the walls, the more active youths assembled, and the quoit was hurled, or mimic

battles waged with weapons of wood, or the Dorians weaved their simple, the Ionians their more intricate or less decorous dances. At that hour Lysander, wandering from the circles of his countrymen, walked musingly by the seashore.

"And why," said the voice of a person who had approached him unperceived, "and why, O Lysander, art thou absent from thy comrades, thou model and theme of the youths of Sparta, foremost in their manly sports as in their martial labours?"

Lysander turned, and bowed low his graceful head; for he who accosted him was scarcely more honoured by the Athenians, whom his birth, his wealth, and his popular demeanour dazzled, than by the plain sons of Sparta, who in his simple garb, his blunt and hasty manner, his professed admiration for all things Spartan, beheld one Athenian at least congenial to their tastes.

"The child that misses its mother," answered Lysander, "has small joy with its playmates. And I, a Spartan, pine for Sparta."

"Truly," returned Cimon, "there must be charms in thy noble country of which we other Greeks know but little, if amidst all the luxuries and delights of Byzantium thou canst pine for her rugged hills. And although, as thou knowest well, I was once a sojourner in thy city as ambassador from my own, yet to foreigners so little of the inner Spartan life is revealed that I pray thee to satisfy my curiosity, and explain to me the charm that reconciles thee and thine to institutions which seem to the Ionians at war with the pleasures and the graces of social life."¹

¹. Alexander, king of Macedon, had visited the Athenians with overtures of peace and alliance from Xerxes and Mardonius. These overtures were confined to the Athenians alone, and the Spartans were fearful lest they should be accepted. The Athenians, however, generously refused them. Gold, said they, hath no amount, earth no territory, how beautiful soever, that could tempt the Athenians to accept conditions from the Mede for the servitude of Greece. On this the Persians invaded Attica, and the Athenians, after waiting in vain for promised aid from Sparta, took refuge at Salamis. Meanwhile, they had sent messengers or ambassadors to Sparta to remonstrate on the violation of their agreement in delaying succour. This chanced

"Ill can the native of one land explain to the son of another why he loves it," returned Lysander. "That which the Ionian calls pleasure, is to me but tedious vanity; that which he calls grace, is to me but enervate levity. Me it pleases to find the day, from sunrise to night, full of occupations that leave no languor, that employ, but not excite. For the morning, our gymnasia, our military games, the chase, — diversions that brace the limbs and leave us in peace fit for war; diversions which, unlike the brawls of the wordy Agora, bless us with the calm mind and clear spirit resulting from vigorous habits, and ensuring jocund health. Noon brings our simple feast, shared in public, enlivened by jest; late at eve we collect in our Leschæ, and the winter nights seem short, listening to the old men's talk of our sires and heroes. To us life is one serene yet active holiday. No Spartan condescends to labour, yet no Spartan can womanize himself by ease. For us, too, differing from you Ionian Greeks, for us women are companions, not slaves. Man's youth is passed under the eyes and in the presence of those from whom he may select, as his heart inclines, the future mother of his children. Not for us your feverish and miserable ambitions, the intrigues of demagogues, the drudgery of the mart, the babble of the populace; we alone know the quiet repose of heart. That which I see everywhere else, the gnawing strife of passion, visits not the stately calm of the Spartan life. We have the leisure, not of the body alone, but of the soul. Equality with us is the all in all, and we know not that jealous anguish, — the desire to rise one above the other. We busy ourselves not in making wealth, in ruling mobs, in ostentatious rivalries of State and gaud and power, — struggles without an object. When we struggle, it is for an end. Nothing moves us from our calm but danger to Sparta or woe to Hellas. Harmony, peace, and order, — these are the graces of our social life. Pity us, O Athenian!"

Cimon had listened with profound attention to a speech at the very time when, by the death of his father, Cleombrotus, Pausanias became regent. Slowly, and after much hesitation, the Spartans sent them aid under Pausanias. Two of the ambassadors were Aristides and Cimon.

unusually prolix and descriptive for a Spartan; and he sighed deeply as it closed. For that young Athenian, destined to so renowned a place in the history of his country, was, despite his popular manners, no favourer of the popular passions. Lofty and calm, and essentially an aristocrat by nature and opinion, this picture of a life unruffled by the restless changes of democracy, safe and aloof from the shifting humours of the multitude, charmed and allured him. He forgot for the moment those counter-propensities which made him still Athenian, — the taste for magnificence, the love of women, and the desire of rule. His busy schemes slept within him, and he answered, —

“Happy is the Spartan who thinks with you. Yet,” he added, after a pause, “yet own that there are amongst you many to whom the life you describe has ceased to proffer the charms that enthrall you, and who envy the more diversified and exciting existence of surrounding States. Lysander’s eulogiums shame his chief, Pausanias.”

“It is not for me, nor for thee, whose years scarce exceed my own, to judge of our elders in renown,” said Lysander, with a slight shade over his calm brow. “Pausanias will surely be found still a Spartan when Sparta needs him; and the heart of the Heracleid beats under the robe of the Mede.”

“Be frank with me, Lysander: thou knowest that my own countrymen often jealously accuse me of loving Sparta too well. I imitate, say they, the manners and dress of the Spartan, as Pausanias those of the Mede. Trust me, then, and bear with me when I say that Pausanias ruins the cause of Sparta. If he tarry here longer in the command, he will render all the allies enemies to thy country. Already he has impaired his fame and dimmed his laurels; already, despite his pretexts and excuses, we perceive that his whole nature is corrupted. Recall him to Sparta while it is yet time, — time to reconcile the Greeks with Sparta; time to save the hero of Plataea from the contaminations of the East. Preserve his own glory, — dearer to thee as his special friend than to all men, yet dear to me, though an Athenian, from the memory of the deeds which delivered Hellas.”

Cimon spoke with the blunt and candid eloquence natural to him, and to which his manly countenance and earnest tone and character for truth gave singular effect.

Lysander remained long silent. At length he said: "I neither deny nor assent to thine arguments, son of Miltiades. The ephors alone can judge of their wisdom."

"But if we address them, by message, to the ephors, thou and the nobler Spartans will not resent our remonstrances?"

"All that injures Pausanias, Lysander will resent. Little know I of the fables of poets; but Homer is at least as familiar to the Dorian as to the Ionian, and I think, with him, that between friends there is but one love and one anger."

"Then are the frailties of Pausanias dearer to thee than his fame, or Pausanias himself dearer to thee than Sparta, — the erring brother than the venerable mother?"

Lysander's voice died on his lips; the reproof struck home to him. He turned away his face, and with a slow wave of his hand seemed to implore forbearance. Cimon was touched by the action and the generous embarrassment of the Spartan; he saw, too, that he had left in the mind he had addressed thoughts that might work as he had designed, and he judged, by the effect produced on Lysander, what influence the same arguments might effect addressed to others less under the control of personal friendship. Therefore, with a few gentle words, he turned aside, continued his way, and left Lysander alone.

Entering the town, the Athenian threaded his path through some of the narrow lanes and alleys that wound from the quays towards the citadel, avoiding the broader and more frequented streets. The course he took was such as rendered it little probable that he should encounter any of the higher classes, and especially the Spartans, who from their constitutional pride shunned the resorts of the populace. But as he came nearer the citadel, stray Helots were seen, at times, emerging from the inns and drinking houses; and these stopped short and inclined low if they caught sight of him at a distance, for his hat and staff, his majestic stature and composed step, made them take him for a Spartan.

One of these slaves, however, emerging suddenly from a house close by which Cimon passed, recognized him, and retreating within abruptly, entered a room in which a man sat alone and seemingly in profound thought; his cheek rested on one hand, with the other he leaned upon a small lyre, his eyes were bent on the ground, and he started, as a man does, dream-like, from a revery, when the Helot touched him, and said abruptly, and in a tone of surprise and inquiry, —

“Cimon the Athenian is ascending the hill towards the Spartan quarter.”

“The Spartan quarter! Cimon!” exclaimed Aleman, for it was he. “Give me thy cap and hide.”

Hastily enduing himself in these rough garments, and drawing the cap over his face, the Mothon hurried to the threshold, and seeing the Athenian in the distance, followed his footsteps, though, with the skill of a man used to ambush, he kept himself unseen, — now under the projecting roofs of the houses, now skirting the wall, which, heavy with buttresses, led towards the outworks of the citadel. And with such success did he pursue his track that when Cimon paused, at last, at the place of his destination, and gave one vigilant and searching glance around him, he detected no living form.

He had then reached a small space of table-land on which stood a few trees of great age, — all that time and the encroachments of the citadel and the town had spared of the sacred grove which formerly surrounded a rude and primitive temple, the gray columns of which gleamed through the heavy foliage. Passing, with a slow and cautious step, under the thick shadow of the trees, Cimon now arrived before the open door of the temple, placed at the east, so as to admit the first beams of the rising sun. Through the threshold, in the middle of the fane, the eye rested on the statue of Apollo, raised upon a lofty pedestal and surrounded by a rail, — a statue not such as the later genius of the Athenian represented the god of light and youth and beauty; not wrought from Parian marble or smoothest ivory, and in the divinest proportions of the human form, but rude, formal, and roughly hewn from the wood of the yew-tree, — some early effigy of

the god, made by the simple piety of the first Dorian colonizers of Byzantium. Three forms stood mute by an altar, equally homely and ancient, and adorned with horns, placed a little apart and considerably below the statue.

As the shadow of the Athenian, who halted at the threshold, fell long and dark along the floor, the figures turned slowly, and advanced towards him. With an inclination of his head, Cimon retreated from the temple; and looking round, saw abutting from the rear of the building a small cell, or chamber, which doubtless in former times had served some priestly purpose, but now, doorless, empty, desolate, showed the utter neglect into which the ancient shrine of the Dorian god had fallen amidst the gay and dissolute Byzantians. To this cell Cimon directed his steps; the men he had seen in the temple followed him, and all four, with brief and formal greeting, seated themselves, Cimon on a fragment of some broken column, the others on a bench that stretched along the wall.

"Peers of Sparta," said the Athenian, "ye have doubtless ere this revolved sufficiently the grave matter which I opened to you in a former conference, and in which, to hear your decision, I seek at your appointment these sacred precincts."

"Son of Miltiades," answered the blunt Polydorus, "you inform us that it is the intention of the Athenians to despatch a messenger to Sparta demanding the instant recall of Pausanias. You ask us to second that request. But without our aid the Athenians are masters to do as they will. Why should we abet your quarrel against the regent?"

"Friend," replied Cimon, "we the Athenians confess to no quarrel with Pausanias; what we demand is to avoid all quarrel with him or yourselves. You seem to have overlooked my main arguments. Permit me to re-urge them briefly. If Pausanias remains, the allies have resolved openly to revolt; if you, the Spartans, assist your chief, as methinks you needs must do, you are at once at war with the rest of the Greeks. If you desert him, you leave Hellas without a chief, and we will choose one of our own. Meanwhile, in the midst of our dissensions the towns and States well affected to Persia will

return to her sway, and Persia herself falls upon us, as no longer an united enemy, but an easy prey. For the sake, therefore, of Sparta and of Greece, we entreat you to co-operate with us, or rather, to let the recall of Pausanias be effected more by the wise precaution of the Spartans than by the fierce resolve of the other Greeks. So you save best the dignity of your State, and so, in reality, you best serve your chief; for less shameful to him is it to be recalled by you than to be deposed by us."

"I know not," said Gelon, surlily, "what Sparta hath to do at all with this foreign expedition; we are safe in our own defiles."

"Pardon me if I remind you that you were scarcely safe at Thermopylæ, and that had the advice Demaratus proffered to Xerxes been taken, and that island of Cithera, which commands Sparta itself, been occupied by Persian troops, as in a future time, if Sparta desert Greece, it may be, you were undone. And, wisely or not, Sparta is now in command at Byzantium, and it behooves her to maintain, with the dignity she assumes, the interests she represents. Grant that Pausanias be recalled, another Spartan can succeed him. Whom of your countrymen would you prefer to that high post, if you, O Peers, aid us in the dismissal of Pausanias?"¹

¹ This chapter was left unfinished by the author,—probably with the intention of recasting it. Such an intention, at least, is indicated by the marginal marks upon the manuscript. — L.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

THE fountain sparkled to the noonday, the sward around it was sheltered from the sun by vines formed into shadowy arcades, with interlaced leaves for roof. Afar through the vistas thus formed gleamed the blue of a sleeping sea.

Under the hills, or close by the margin of the fountain, Cleonice was seated upon a grassy knoll covered with wild flowers. Behind her, at a little distance, grouped her hand-maids, engaged in their womanly work, and occasionally conversing in whispers. At her feet reposed the grand form of Pausanias. Alcman stood not far behind him, his hand resting on his lyre, his gaze fixed upon the upward jet of the fountain.

"Behold," said Cleonice, "how the water soars up to the level of its source! "

"As my soul would soar to thy love," said the Spartan, amorously.

"As thy soul should soar to the stars. O son of Hercules, when I hear thee burst into thy wild flights of ambition, I see not thy way to the stars."

"Why dost thou ever thus chide the ambition which may give me thee?"

"No; for thou mightest then be as much below me as thou art now above. Too humble to mate with the Heracleid, I am too proud to stoop to the tributary of the Mede."

"Tributary for a sprinkling of water and a handful of earth. Well, my pride may revolt, too, from that tribute. But, alas! what is the tribute Sparta exacts from me now? Personal liberty, — freedom of soul itself. The Mede's tribu-

tary may be a king over millions; the Spartan regent is a slave to the few."

"Cease, cease, cease! I will not hear thee," cried Cleonice, placing her hands on her ears.

Pausanias gently drew them away, and holding them both captive in the large clasp of his own right hand, gazed eagerly into her pure, unshrinking eyes.

"Tell me," he said, — "for in much thou art wiser than I am, unjust though thou art, — tell me this. Look onward to the future with a gaze as steadfast as now meets mine, and say if thou canst discover any path except that which it pleases thee to condemn, which may lead thee and me to the marriage altar!"

Down sank those candid eyes, and the virgin's cheek grew first rosy red, and then pale, as if every drop of blood had receded to the heart.

"Speak!" insisted Pausanias, softening his haughty voice to its meekest tone.

"I cannot see the path to the altar," murmured Cleonice, and the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"And if thou seest it not," returned Pausanias, "art thou brave enough to say, — Be we lost to each other for life? I, though man and Spartan, am not brave enough to say that."

He released her hands as he spoke, and clasped his own over his face. Both were long silent.

Aleman had for some moments watched the lovers with deep interest, and had caught into his listening ears the purport of their words. He now raised his lyre, and swept his hand over the chords. The touch was that of a master, and the musical sounds produced their effect on all. The handmaids paused from their work. Cleonice turned her eyes wistfully towards the Mothon. Pausanias drew his hands from his face, and cried joyously, "I accept the omen. Foster-brother, I have heard that measure to a Hymeneal Song. Sing us the words that go with the melody."

"Nay," said Aleman, gently, "the words are not those which are sung before youth and maiden when they walk over perishing flowers to bridal altars; they are the words

which embody a legend of the land in which the heroes of old dwell, removed from earth, yet preserved from Hades."

"Ah," said Cleonice, — and a strange expression, calmly mournful, settled on her features, — "then the words may haply utter my own thoughts. Sing them to us, I pray thee."

The Mothon bowed his head, and thus began: —

THE ISLE OF SPIRITS.

Many wonders on the ocean
By the moonlight may be seen.
Under moonlight on the Euxine
Rose the blessed silver isle,

As Leostratus of Croton,
At the Pythian God's behest,
Steered along the troubled waters
To the tranquil spirit-land.

In the earthquake of the battle,
When the Locrians reeled before
Croton's shock of marching iron,
Strode a Phantom to their van, —

Strode the shade of Locrian Ajax,
Guarding still the native soil,
And Leostratus, confronting,
Wounded fell before the spear.

Leech and herb the wound could heal not;
Said the Pythian God, "Depart,
Voyage o'er the troubled Euxine
To the tranquil spirit-land.

"There abides the Locrian Ajax:
He who gave the wound shall heal;
Godlike souls are in their mercy
Stronger yet than in their wrath."

While at ease on lullèd waters
Rose the blessed silver isle,
Purple vines in lengthening vistas
Knit the hill-top to the beach.

And the beach had sparry caverns,
And a floor of golden sands,
And wherever soared the cypress,
Underneath it bloomed the rose.

Glimmered there amid the vine-trees
Thorough cavern, over beach,
Lifelike shadows of a beauty
Which the living know no more, —

Towering statures of great heroes,
They who fought at Thebes and Troy;
And with looks that poets dream of,
Beamed the women heroes loved.

Kingly, forth before their comrades,
As the vessel touched the shore,
Came the stateliest Two, by Hymen
Ever hallowed into One.

As He strode, the forests trembled
To the awe that crowned his brow;
As She stepped, the ocean dimpled
To the ray that left her smile.

"Welcome hither, fearless warrior!"
Said a voice in which there slept
Thunder-sounds to scatter armies
As a north-wind scatters leaves.

"Welcome hither, wounded sufferer,"
Said a voice of music low
As the coo of doves that nestle
Under summer boughs at noon.

"Who are ye, O shapes of glory?"
Asked the wondering living man.
Quoth the Man-ghost, "This is Helen,
And the Fair is for the Brave.

"Fairest prize to bravest victor:
Whom doth Greece her bravest deem?"
Said Leostratus, "Achilles."
"Bride and bridegroom then are we."

"Low I kneel to thee, Pelides;
But, oh, marvel — she thy bride,
She whose guilt unpeopled Hellas,
She whose marriage lights fired Troy?"

Frowned the large front of Achilles,
Overshadowing sea and sky,
Even as when between Olympus
And Oceanus hangs storm.

"Know, thou dullard," said Pelides,
"That on the funeral pyre
Earthly sins are purged from glory,
And the Soul is as the Name.

"If to her in life, a Paris,
If to me in life, a slave,
Helen's mate is *here* Achilles, —
Mine, the sister of the stars.

"Nought of her survives but beauty,
Nought of me survives but fame;
Here the Beautiful and Famous
Intermingle evermore."

Then throughout the Blessed Island
Sang aloud the Race of Light:
"Know, the Beautiful and Famous
Marry here forevermore!"

"Thy song bears a meaning deeper than its words," said Pausanias; "but if that meaning be consolation, I comprehend it not."

"I do," said Cleonice. "Singer, I pray thee draw near. Let us talk of what my lost mother said was the favourite theme of the grander sages of Miletus. Let us talk of what lies afar and undiscovered amid waters more troubled than the Euxine. Let us speak of the Land of Souls."

"Who ever returned from that land to tell us of it?" said Pausanias. "Voyagers that never voyaged thither save in song."

"Son of Cleombrotus," said Alcman, "hast thou not heard that in one of the cities founded by thine ancestor, Hercules, and named after his own name, there yet dwells a Priesthood that can summon to living eyes the Phantoms of the dead?"

"No," answered Pausanias, with the credulous wonder common to eager natures which Philosophy has not withdrawn from the realm of superstition.

"But," asked Cleonice, "does it need the Necromancer to convince us that the soul does not perish when the breath leaves the lips? If I judge the burden of thy song aright, thou art not, O singer, uninitiated in the divine and consoling doctrines which, emanating, it is said, from the schools of Miletus, establish the immortality of the soul, not for Demigods and Heroes only, but for us all; which imply the soul's purification from earthly sins, in some regions less chilling and stationary than the sunless and melancholy Hades."

Alcman looked at the girl, surprised.

"Art thou not, maiden," said he, "one of the many female disciples whom the successors of Pythagoras the Samian have enrolled?"

"Nay," said Cleonice, modestly; "but my mother had listened to great teachers of wisdom, and I speak imperfectly the thoughts I have heard her utter when she told me she had no terror of the grave."

"Fair Byzantine," returned the Mothon, while Pausanias, leaning his upraised face on his hand, listened mutely to themes new to his mind and foreign to his Spartan culture, — "fair Byzantine, we in Lacedæmon, whether free or enslaved, are not educated to the subtle learning which distinguishes the intellect of Ionian Sages. But I, born and licensed to be a poet, converse eagerly with all who swell the stores which enrich the treasure-house of song. And thus, since we have left the land of Sparta, and more especially in yon city, the centre of many tribes and of many minds, I have picked up, as it were, desultory and scattered notions, which, for want of a fitting teacher, I bind and arrange for myself as well as I may. And since the ideas that now float through the atmosphere of Hellas are not confined to the great, — nay, perhaps are less visible to them than to those whose eyes are not riveted on the absorbing substances of ambition and power, — so I have learned something, I know not how, save that I have listened, and reflected. And here, where I have heard what sages conjecture of a world which seems so far off, but to which we are so near that we may

reach it in a moment, my interest might indeed be intense. For what is this world to him who came into it a slave?"

"Alcman," exclaimed Pausanias, "the foster-brother of the Heracleid is no more a slave."

The Mothon bowed his head gratefully, but the expression on his face retained the same calm and sombre resignation.

"Alas!" said Cleonice, with the delicacy of female consolation, "who in this life is really free? Have citizens no thralldom in custom and law? Are we not all slaves?"

"True. All slaves!" murmured the royal victor. "Envy none, O Alcman! Yet," he continued gloomily, "what is the life beyond the grave which sacred tradition and ancient song hold out to us? Not thy silver island, vain singer, unless it be only for an early race more immediately akin to the Gods. Shadows in the shade are the dead; at the best reviving only their habits when on earth, in phantom-like delusions, — aiming spectral darts like Orion at spectral lions; things bloodless and pulseless; existences followed to no purpose through eternity, as dreams are through a night. Who cares so to live again? Not I."

"The sages that now rise around, and speak oracles different from those heard at Delphi," said Alcman, "treat not thus the Soul's immortality. They begin by inquiring how creation rose; they seek to find the primitive element. What that may be, they dispute; some say the fiery, some the airy, some the ethereal element. Their language here is obscure. But it is a something which forms, harmonizes, works, and lives on forever. And of that something is the Soul, — creative, harmonious, active, an element in itself. Out of its development here, that soul comes on to a new development elsewhere. If here the beginning lead to that new development in what we call virtue, it moves to light and joy; if it can only roll on through the grooves it has here made for itself in what we call vice and crime, its path is darkness and wretchedness."

"In what we call virtue, — what we call vice and crime? Ah," said Pausanias, with a stern sneer, "Spartan virtue, O Alcman, is what a Helot may call crime. And if ever the Helot rose

and shouted freedom, would he not say, 'This is virtue'? Would the Spartan call it virtue too, my foster-brother?"

"Son of Cleombrotus," answered Alcman, "it is not for me to vindicate the acts of the master, nor to blame the slave who is of my race. Yet the sage definers of virtue distinguish between the Conscience of a Polity and that of the Individual Man. Self-preservation is the instinct of every community, and all the ordinances ascribed to Lycurgus are designed to preserve the Spartan existence. For what are the pure Spartan race? A handful of men established as lords in the midst of a hostile population. Close by the eery thine eagle fathers built in the rocks, hung the silent Amyclæ, a city of foes that cost the Spartans many generations to subdue. Hence thy State was a camp, its citizens sentinels; its children were brought up from the cradle to support the stern life to which necessity devoted the men. Hardship and privation were second nature. Not enough to be brave, vigilance was equally essential. Every Spartan life was precious; therefore came the cunning which characterizes the Spartan; therefore the boy is permitted to steal, but punished if detected; therefore the whole commonwealth strives to keep aloof from the wars of Greece, unless itself be threatened. A single battle in a common cause might suffice to depopulate the Spartan race, and leave it at the mercy of the thousands that so reluctantly own its dominion. Hence the ruthless determination to crush the spirit, to degrade the class, of the enslaved Helots; hence its dread lest the slumbering brute force of the Servile find in its own masses a head to teach the consciousness, and a hand to guide the movements, of its power. These are the necessities of the Polity, — its vices are the outgrowth of its necessities; and the life that so galls thee, and which has sometimes rendered mad those who return to it from having known another, and the danger that evermore surrounds the lords of a sullen multitude, are the punishments of these vices. Comprehendest thou?"

"I comprehend."

"But individuals have a conscience apart from that of the community. Every community has its errors in its laws.

No human laws, how skilfully soever framed, but give to a national character defects as well as merits, merits as well as defects. Craft, selfishness, cruelty to the subdued, inhospitable frigidity to neighbours, make the defects of the Spartan character. But," added Aleman, with a kind of reluctant anguish in his voice, "the character has its grand virtues too, or would the Helots not be the masters? Valour indomitable, grand scorn of death, passionate ardour for the State which is so severe a mother to them, antique faith in the sacred altars, sublime devotion to what is held to be duty, — are these not found in the Spartan beyond all the Greeks, as thou seest them in thy friend Lysander; in that soul, stately, pure, compact in its own firm substance as a statue within a temple is in its Parian stone? But what the Gods ask from man is virtue in himself, according as he comprehends it. And, therefore, here all societies are equal; for the Gods pardon in the man the faults he shares with his community, and ask from him but the good and the beautiful, such as the nature of his community will permit him to conceive and to accomplish. Thou knowest that there are many kinds of music — for instance, the Doric, the Æolian, the Ionian — in Hellas. The Lydians have their music, the Phrygians theirs too. The Scyth and the Mede doubtless have their own. Each race prefers the music it cultivates, and finds fault with the music of other races. And yet a man who has learned melody and measure will recognize a music in them all. So it is with virtue, — the music of the human soul. It differs in differing races. But he who has learned to know what virtue is, can recognize its harmonies, wherever they be heard. And thus the soul that fulfils its own notions of music, and carries them up to its idea of excellence, is the master soul; and in the regions to which it goes, when the breath leaves the lips, it pursues the same art set free from the trammels that confined and the false judgments that marred it here. For then the soul is no longer Spartan or Ionian, Lydian, Median, or Scythian. Escaped into the upper air, it is the citizen of universal freedom and universal light. And hence it does not live as a ghost in gloomy shades, being merely a pale

memory of things that have passed away, but in its primitive being as an emanation from the one divine principle which penetrates everywhere, vivifies all things, and enjoys in all. This is what I weave together from the doctrines of varying schools; — schools that collect from the fields of thought flowers of different kinds which conceal, by adorning it, the ligament that unites them all. This, I say, O Pausanias, is my conception of the soul."

Cleonice rose softly, and taking from her bosom a rose, kissed it fervently and laid it at the feet of the singer.

"Were this my soul," cried she, "I would ask thee to bind it in the wreath."

Vague and troubled thoughts passed meanwhile through the mind of the Heracleid; old ideas being disturbed and dislodged, the new ones did not find easy settlement in a brain occupied with ambitious schemes and a heart agitated by stormy passions. In much superstitious, in much sceptical, as education had made him the one, and experience but of worldly things was calculated to make him the other, he followed not the wing of the philosophy which passed through heights not occupied by Olympus, and dived into depths where no Tartarus echoed to the wail of Cocytus.

After a pause he said, in his perplexity, —

"Well mayst thou own that no Delphian oracle tells thee all this. And when thou speakest of the Divine Principle as One, dost thou not, O presumptuous man, depopulate the Halls of Ida? Nay, is it not Zeus himself whom thou dethronest? Is not thy Divine Principle the Fate which Zeus himself must obey?"

"There is a young man of Clazomenæ," answered the singer, "named Anaxagoras, who, avoiding all active life, though of birth the noblest, gives himself up to contemplation, and whom I have listened to in the city as he passed through it, on his way into Egypt. And I heard him say, 'Fate is an empty name.'¹ Fate is blind; the Divine is All-seeing."

¹ Anaxagoras was then between twenty and thirty years of age. See Ritter, vol. ii., for the sentiment here ascribed to him, and a general view of his tenets.

"How!" cried Cleonice. "An empty name, she, Necessity the All-compelling."

The musician drew from the harp one of the most artful of Sappho's exquisite melodies.

"What drew forth that music?" he asked, smiling. "My hand and my will from a genius not present, not visible. Was that genius a blind fate? No, it was a grand intelligence. Nature is to the Deity what my hand and will are to the unseen genius of the musician. They obey an intelligence and they form a music. If creation proceed from an intelligence, what we call fate is but the consequence of its laws. And Nature operates not in the external world alone, but in the core of all life; therefore in the mind of man, obeying only what some supreme intelligence has placed there; therefore in man's mind, producing music or discord, according as he has learned the principles of harmony, — that is, of good. And there be sages who declare that Intelligence and Love are the same. Yet," added the Mothon, with an aspect solemnly compassionate, "not the love thou mockest by the name of Aphrodite. No mortal eye hath ever seen that love within the known sphere, yet all insensibly feel its reign. What keeps the world together but affection? What makes the earth bring forth its fruits, but the kindness which beams in the sunlight and descends in the dews? What makes the lioness watch over her cubs, and the bird, with all air for its wanderings, come back to the fledglings in its nest? Strike love, the conjoiner, from creation, and creation returns to a void. Destroy love the parental, and life is born but to perish. Where stop the influence of love, or how limit its multifiform degrees? Love guards the fatherland, crowns with turrets the walls of the freeman. What but love binds the citizens of States together, and frames and heeds the laws that submit individual liberty to the rule of the common good? Love creates, love cements, love enters and harmonizes all things. And as like attracts like, so love attracts in the hereafter the loving souls that conceived it here. From the region where it summons them, its opposites are excluded. There ceases war; there ceases pain. There indeed inter-

minge the beautiful and glorious, but beauty purified from earthly sin, the glorious resting from earthly toil. Ask ye how to know on earth where love is really presiding? Not in Paphos, not in Amathus. Wherever thou seest beauty and good, wherever thou seest life, and that life pervaded with faculties of joy, there thou seest love, there thou shouldst recognize the Divinity."

"And where I see misery and hate," said the Spartan, "what should I recognize there?"

"Master," returned the singer, "can the good come without a struggle? Is the beautiful accomplished without strife? Recall the tales of primeval chaos, when, as sang the Ascrean singer, love first darted into the midst; imagine the heave and throe of joining elements; conjure up the first living shapes, born of the fluctuating slime and vapour. Surely they were things incomplete, deformed, ghastly fragments of being, as are the dreams of a maniac. Had creative Love stopped there, and then, standing on the height of some fair completed world, had viewed the warring portents, wouldst thou not have said: 'But these are the works of Evil and Hate'? Love did not stop there, it worked on; and out of the chaos, once ensouled, this glorious world swung itself into ether, the completed sister of the stars. Again, O my listeners, contemplate the sculptor when the block from the granite shaft first stands, rude and shapeless, before him. See him in his earlier strife with the obstinate matter, — how uncouth the first outline of limb and feature; unlovelier often in the rugged commencements of shape, than when the dumb mass stood shapeless. If the sculptor had stopped there, the thing might serve as an image for the savage of an abominable creed, engaged in the sacrifice of human flesh. But he pauses not, he works on. Stroke by stroke comes from the stone a shape of more beauty than man himself is endowed with, and in a human temple stands a celestial image.

"Thus is it with the soul in the mundane sphere: it works its way on through the adverse matter. We see its work half completed; we cry, 'Lo, this is misery, this is hate!' because the chaos is not yet a perfected world, and the stone block is

not yet a statue of Apollo. But for that reason must we pause? No, we must work on, till the victory brings the repose.

"All things come into order from the war of contraries, — the elements fight and wrestle to produce the wild-flower at our feet; from a wild-flower man hath striven and toiled to perfect the marvellous rose of the hundred leaves. Hate is necessary for the energies of love, evil for the activity of good, until, I say, the victory is won, until Hate and Evil are subdued, as the sculptor subdues the stone; and then rises the divine image, serene forever, and rests on its pedestal in the Uranian Temple. Lift thine eyes, — that temple is yonder. O Pausanias, the sculptor's workroom is the earth."

Alcman paused, and sweeping his hand once more over his lyre, chanted as follows: —

"Dewdrop that weapest on the sharp-barbéd thorn,
Why didst thou fall from Day's golden chalices?
'My tears bathe the thorn,' said the Dewdrop,
'To nourish the bloom of the rose.'

"Soul of the Infant, why to calamity
Comest thou, wailing, from the calm spirit-source?
'Ask of the Dew,' said the Infant,
'Why it descends on the thorn.'

"Dewdrop from storm, and soul from calamity
Vanish soon, — whither? Let the Dew answer thee;
'Have not my tears been my glory?
Tears drew me up to the sun.'

"What were thine uses, that thou art glorified?
What did thy tears give, profiting earth or sky?
'There, to the thorn-stem a blossom,
Here, to the Iris a tint.'"

Alcman had modulated the tones of his voice into a sweetness so plaintive and touching that when he paused, the handmaidens had involuntarily risen and gathered round, hushed and noiseless. Cleonice had lowered her veil over her face and bosom; but the heaving of its tissue betrayed her half-suppressed, gentle sob, and the proud mournfulness on the

Spartan's swarthy countenance had given way to a soft composure, melancholy still, but melancholy as a lulled, though dark water over which starlight steals through disparted cloud.

Cleonice was the first to break the spell which bound them all.

"I would go within," she murmured faintly. "The sun, now slanting, strikes through the vine-leaves, and blinds me with its glare."

Pausanias approached timidly, and taking her by the hand, drew her aside along one of the grassy alleys that stretched onwards to the sea.

The handmaidens tarried behind to cluster nearer round the singer; they forgot he was a slave.

CHAPTER II.

"THOU art weeping still, Cleonice," said the Spartan, "and I have not the privilege to kiss away thy tears."

"Nay, I weep not," answered the girl, throwing up her veil; and her face was calm, if still sad, the tear yet on the eyelids, but the smile upon the lip, — *δακρύνει γελάουσα*. "Thy singer has learned his art from a teacher heavenlier than the Pierides, and its name is Hope."

"But if I understand him aright," said Pausanias, "the Hope that inspires him is a goddess who blesses us little on the earth."

As if the Mothon had overheard the Spartan, his voice here suddenly rose behind them, singing, —

*"There the Beautiful and Glorious
Intermingle evermore."*

Involuntarily both turned. The Mothon seemed as if explaining to the handmaids the allegory of his marriage song upon Helen and Achilles, for his hand was raised on high, and again with an emphasis, he chanted, —

"There, throughout the Blessed Islands,
And amid the Race of Light,
Do the Beautiful and Glorious
Intermingle evermore."

"Canst thou not wait, if thou so lovest me?" said Cleonice, with more tenderness in her voice than it had ever yet betrayed to him. "Life is very short. Hush!" she continued, checking the passionate interruption that burst from his lips; "I have something I would confide to thee: listen. Know that in my childhood I had a dear friend, a maiden a few years older than myself, and she had the divine gift of trance, which comes from Apollo. Often, gazing into space, her eyes became fixed, and her frame still as a statue's; then a shiver seized her limbs, and prophecy broke from her lips. And she told me, in one of these hours, when, as she said, 'all space and all time seemed spread before her like a sunlit ocean,' she told me of my future, so far as its leaves have yet unfolded from the stem of my life. Spartan, she prophesied that I should see thee, and —" Cleonice paused, blushing, and then hurried on, "and she told me that suddenly her eye could follow my fate on the earth no more, that it vanished out of the time and the space on which it gazed, and saying it she wept, and broke into funeral song. And therefore, Pausanias, I say life is very short, for me, at least —"

"Hold!" cried Pausanias; "torture not me, nor delude thyself with the dreams of a raving girl. Lives she near? Let me visit her with thee, and I will prove thy prophetess an impostor."

"They whom the priesthood of Delphi employ throughout Hellas to find the fit natures for a Pythoness heard of her, and heard herself. She whom thou callest impostor gives the answer to perplexed nations from the Pythian shrine. But wherefore doubt her? Where the sorrow? I feel none. If love does rule the worlds beyond, and does unite souls who love nobly here, yonder we shall meet, O descendant of Hercules, and human laws will not part us there."

"Thou die, die before me, — thou, scarcely half my years! And I be left here, with no comfort but a singer's dreamy

verse, not even mine ambition! Thrones would vanish out of earth and turn to cinders in thine urn."

"Speak not of thrones," said Cleonice, with imploring softness, "for the prophetess, too, spake of steps that went towards a throne, and vanished at the threshold of darkness, beside which sat the Furies. Speak not of thrones, dream but of glory and Hellas, — of what thy soul tells thee is that virtue which makes life an Uranian music, and thus unites it to the eternal symphony, as the breath of the single flute melts when it parts from the instrument into the great concord of the choir. Knowest thou not that in the creed of the Persians each mortal is watched on earth by a good spirit and an evil one? And they who loved us below, or to whom we have done beneficent and gentle deeds, if they go before us into death, pass to the side of the good spirit, and strengthen him to save and to bless thee against the malice of the bad; and the bad is strengthened in his turn by those whom we have injured. Wouldst thou have all the Greeks whose birth-right thou wouldst barter, whose blood thou wouldst shed for barbaric aid to thy solitary and lawless power, stand by the side of the evil Fiend? And what could I do against so many? What could my soul do," added Cleonice, with simple pathos, "by the side of the kinder spirit?"

Pausanias was wholly subdued. He knelt to the girl, he kissed the hem of her robe, and for the moment ambition, luxury, pomp, pride fled from his soul, and left there only the grateful tenderness of the man, and the lofty instincts of the hero. But just then — was it the evil spirit that sent him? — the boughs of the vine were put aside, and Gongylus the Eretrian stood before them. His black eyes glittered keen upon Pausanias, who rose from his knee, startled and displeased.

"What brings thee hither, man?" said the regent, haughtily.

"Danger," answered Gongylus, in a hissing whisper. "Lose not a moment; come."

"Danger!" exclaimed Cleonice, tremblingly, and clasping her hands, and all the human love at her heart was visible in her aspect, "danger, and to *him*!"

"Danger is but as the breeze of my native air," said the Spartan, smiling; "thus I draw it in and thus breathe it away. I follow thee, Gongylus. Take my greeting, Cleonice, — the Good to the Beautiful. Well, then, keep Alcman yet a while to sing thy kind face to repose, and this time let him tune his lyre to songs of a more Dorian strain, — songs that show what a Heracleid thinks of danger."

He waved his hand, and the two men, striding hastily, passed along the vine alley, darkened its vista for a few minutes, then vanishing down the descent to the beach, the wide blue sea again lay lone and still before the eyes of the Byzantine maid.

CHAPTER III.

PAUSANIAS and the Eretrian halted on the shore.

"Now speak," said the Spartan regent. "Where is the danger?"

"Before thee," answered Gongylus, and his hand pointed to the ocean.

"I see the fleet of the Greeks in the harbour, I see the flag of my galley above the forest of their masts. I see detached vessels skimming along the waves hither and thither as in holiday and sport; but discipline slackens where no foe dares to show himself. Eretrian, I see no danger."

"Yet danger is there, and where danger is, thou shouldst be. I have learned from my spies, not an hour since, that there is a conspiracy formed, — a mutiny on the eve of an outburst. Thy place now should be in thy galley."

"My boat waits yonder in that creek, overspread by the wild shrubs," answered Pausanias; "a few strokes of the oar, and I am where thou seest. And in truth, without thy summons, I should have been on board ere sunset, seeing that on the morrow I have ordered a general review of the vessels of the fleet. Was that to be the occasion for the mutiny?"

"So it is supposed."

"I shall see the faces of the mutineers," said Pausanias, with a calm visage, and an eye which seemed to brighten the very atmosphere. "Thou shakest thy head: is this all?"

"Thou art not a bird, — this moment in one place, that moment in another. There, with yon armament, is the danger thou canst meet. But yonder sails a danger which thou canst not, I fear me, overtake."

"Yonder!" said Pausanias, his eye following the hand of the Eretrian. "I see nought save the white wing of a seagull, — perchance, by its dip into the water, it foretells a storm."

"Farther off than the seagull, and seeming smaller than the white spot of its wing, sees thou nothing?"

"A dim speck on the farthest horizon, if mine eyes mistake not."

"The speck of a sail that is bound to Sparta. It carries with it a request for thy recall."

This time the cheek of Pausanias paled, and his voice slightly faltered as he said, —

"Art thou sure of this?"

"So I hear that the Samian captain, Uliades, has boasted at noon in the public baths."

"A Samian! Is it only a Samian who hath ventured to address to Sparta a complaint of her general?"

"From what I could gather," replied Gongylus, "the complaint is more powerfully backed. But I have not as yet heard more; though I conjecture that Athens has not been silent, and before the vessel sailed, Ionian captains were seen to come with joyous faces from the lodgings of Cimon."

The regent's brow grew yet more troubled. "Cimon, of all the Greeks out of Laconia, is the one whose word would weigh most in Sparta. But my Spartans themselves are not suspected of privity and connivance in this mission?"

"It is not said that they are."

Pausanias shaded his face with his hand for a moment in deep thought. Gongylus continued, —

"If the ephors recall thee before the Asian army is on the frontier, farewell to the sovereignty of Hellas!"

"Ha!" cried Pausanias, "tempt me not. Thinkest thou I need other tempter than I have here?" smiting his breast.

Gongylus recoiled in surprise. "Pardon me, Pausanias, but temptation is another word for hesitation. I dreamed not that I could tempt; I did not know that thou didst hesitate."

The Spartan remained silent.

"Are not thy messengers on the road to the Great King? Nay, perhaps already they have reached him. Didst thou not say how intolerable to thee would be life henceforth in the iron thralldom of Sparta, — and now?"

"And now — I forbid thee to question me more. Thou hast performed thy task, leave me to mine."

He sprang with the spring of the mountain-goat from the crag on which he stood, over a precipitous chasm, lighted on a narrow ledge from which a slip of the foot would have been sure death, another bound yet more fearful, and his whole weight hung suspended by the bough of the ilex, which he grasped with a single hand; then from bough to bough, from crag to crag, the Eretrian saw him descending till he vanished amidst the trees that darkened over the fissures at the foot of the cliff.

And before Gongylus had recovered his amaze at the almost preterhuman agility and vigour of the Spartan, and his dizzy sense at the contemplation of such peril braved by another, a boat shot into the sea from the green creek, and he saw Pausanias seated beside Lysander on one of the benches, and conversing with him, as if in calm earnestness, while the ten rowers sent the boat towards the fleet with the swiftness of an arrow to its goal.

"Lysander," said Pausanias, "hast thou heard that the Ionians have offered to me the insult of a mission to the ephors demanding my recall?"

"No. Who would tell me of insult to thee?"

"But hast thou any conjecture that other Spartans around me, and who love me less than thou, would approve, nay, have approved, this embassy of spies and malcontents?"

"I think none have so approved. I fear some would so approve. The Spartans round thee would rejoice did they

know that the pride of their armies, the victor of Plataea, were once more within their walls."

"Even to the danger of Hellas from the Mede?"

"They would rather all Hellas were medized than Pausanias the Heracleid."

"Boy, boy," said Pausanias, between his ground teeth, "dost thou not see that what is sought is the disgrace of Pausanias the Heracleid? Grant that I am recalled from the head of this armament, and on the charge of Ionians, and I am dishonoured in the eyes of all Greece. Dost thou remember in the last Olympiad that when Themistocles, the only rival now to me in glory, appeared on the Altis, assembled Greece rose to greet and do him honour? And if I, deposed, dismissed, appeared at the next Olympiad, how would assembled Greece receive me? Couldst thou not see the pointed finger and hear the muttered taunt, — 'That is Pausanias, whom the Ionians banished from Byzantium.' No, I must abide here; I must prosecute the vast plans which shall dwarf into shadow the petty genius of Themistocles. I must counteract this mischievous embassy to the ephors; I must send to them an ambassador of my own. Lysander, wilt thou go, and burying in thy bosom thine own Spartan prejudices, deem that thou canst only serve me by proving the reasons why I should remain here, pleading for me, arguing for me, and winning my suit?"

"It is for thee to command, and for me to obey thee," answered Lysander, simply. "Is not that the duty of soldier to chief? When we converse as friends, I may contend with thee in speech. When thou sayest, 'Do this,' I execute thine action. To reason with thee would be revolt."

Pausanias placed his clasped hands on the young man's shoulder, and leaving them there, impressively said, —

"I select thee for this mission because thee alone can I trust. And of me hast thou a doubt? Tell me."

"If I saw thee taking the Persian gold, I should say that the Demon had mocked mine eyes with a delusion. Never could I doubt, unless — unless —"

"Unless what?"

"Thou wert standing under Jove's sky against the arms of Hellas."

"And then, if some other chief bade thee raise thy sword against me, thou art Spartan, and wouldst obey?"

"I am Spartan, and cannot believe that I should ever have a cause, or listen to a command, to raise my sword against the chief I now serve and love," replied Lysander.

Pausanias withdrew his hands from the young man's broad shoulder. He felt humbled beside the quiet truth of that sublime soul; his own deceit became more black to his conscience. "Methinks," he said tremulously, "I will not send thee after all; and perhaps the news may be false."

The boat had now gained the fleet, and steering amidst the crowded triremes, made its way towards the floating banner of the Spartan Serpent. More immediately round the general's galley were the vessels of the Peloponnesian allies, by whom he was still honoured. A welcoming shout rose from the seamen lounging on their decks as they caught sight of the renowned Heracleid. Cimon, who was on his own galley at some distance, heard the shout.

"So Pausanias," he said, turning to the officers round him, "has deigned to come on board, to direct, I suppose, the manœuvres for to-morrow."

"I believe it is but the form of a review for manœuvres," said an Athenian officer, "in which Pausanias will inspect the various divisions of the fleet, and if more be intended, will give the requisite orders for a subsequent day. No arrangements demanding much preparation can be anticipated, for Antagoras, the rich Chian, gives a great banquet this day, — a supper to the principal captains of the Isles."

"A frank and hospitable reveller is Antagoras," answered Cimon. "He would have extended his invitation to the Athenians, me included, but in their name I declined."

"May I ask wherefore?" said the officer who had before spoken. "Cimon is not held adverse to wine-cup and myrtle-bough."

"But things are said over some wine-cups and under some myrtle-boughs," answered Cimon, with a quiet laugh, "which

it is imprudence to hear, and would be treason to repeat. Sup with me here on deck, friends, — a supper for sober companions, sober as the Laconian Syssitia; and let not Spartans say that *our* manners are spoiled by the luxuries of Byzantium."

CHAPTER IV.

IN an immense peristyle of a house which a Byzantine noble, ruined by lavish extravagance, had been glad to cede to the accommodation of Antagoras and other officers of Chios, the young rival of Pausanias feasted the chiefs of the Ægean. However modern civilization may in some things surpass the ancient, it is certainly not in luxury and splendour. And although the Hellenic States had not at that period aimed at the pomp of show and the refinements of voluptuous pleasure which preceded their decline, and although they never did carry luxury to the wondrous extent which it reached in Asia, or even in Sicily, yet even at that time a wealthy sojourner in such a city as Byzantium could command an entertainment that no monarch in our age would venture to parade before royal guests, and submit to the criticism of tax-paying subjects.

The columns of the peristyle were of dazzling alabaster, with their capitals richly gilt. The space above was roofless; but an immense awning of purple, richly embroidered in Persian looms, — a spoil of some gorgeous Mede, — shaded the feasters from the summer sky. The couches on which the banqueters reclined were of citron wood inlaid with ivory, and covered with the tapestries of Asiatic looms. At the four corners of the vast hall played four fountains, and their spray sparkled to a blaze of light from colossal candelabra, in which burned perfumed oil. The guests were not assembled at a single table, but in small groups; to each group its tripod of exquisite workmanship. To that feast of fifty revellers no less than seventy cooks had contributed the inventions of their art, but under one great master, to whose care the ban-

quet had been consigned by the liberal host, and who ransacked earth, sky, and sea for dainties more various than this degenerate age ever sees accumulated at a single board. And the epicure who has but glanced over the elaborate page of Athenæus must own with melancholy self-humiliation that the ancients must have carried the art of flattering the palate to a perfection as absolute as the art which built the Parthenon, and sculptured out of gold and ivory the Olympian Jove. But the first course, with its profusion of birds, flesh, and fishes, its marvellous combinations of forced meats, and inventive poetry of sauces, was now over; and in the interval preceding that second course, in which gastronomy put forth its most exquisite masterpieces, the slaves began to remove the tables, soon to be replaced. Vessels of fragrant waters, in which the banqueters dipped their fingers, were handed round; perfumes which the Byzantine marts collected from every clime, escaped from their precious receptacles.

Then were distributed the garlands. With these each guest crowned locks that steamed with odours, and in them were combined the flowers that most charm the eye, with bud or herb that most guard from the head the fumes of wine: with hyacinth and flax, with golden asphodel and silver lily, the green of ivy and parsley leaf was thus entwined; and above all the rose, said to convey a delicious coolness to the temples on which it bloomed. And now for the first time wine came to heighten the spirits and test the charm of the garlands. Each, as the large goblet passed to him, poured from the brim, before it touched his lips, his libation to the good spirit. And as Antagoras, rising first, set this pious example, out from the farther end of the hall, behind the fountains, burst a concert of flutes and the great Hellenic Hymn of the Pæan.

As this ceased, the fresh tables appeared before the banqueters, covered with all the fruits in season, and with those triumphs in confectionery, of which honey was the main ingredient, that well justified the favour in which the Greeks held the bee.

Then, instead of the pure juice of the grape, from which

the libation had been poured, came the wines, mixed at least three parts with water, and deliciously cooled.

Up again rose Antagoras, and every eye turned to him.

"Companions," said the young Chian, "it is not held in free States well for a man to seize by himself upon supreme authority. We deem that a magistracy should only be obtained by the votes of others. Nevertheless, I venture to think that the latter plan does not always insure to us a good master. I believe it was by election that we Greeks have given to ourselves a generalissimo, — not contented, it is said, to prove the invariable wisdom of that mode of government; wherefore this seems an occasion to revive the good custom of tyranny. And I propose to do so in my person by proclaiming myself Symposiarch and absolute commander in the commonwealth here assembled. But if ye prefer the chance of the die —"

"No, no!" cried the guests, almost universally. "Antagoras the Symposiarch; we submit. Issue thy laws."

"Hearken, then, and obey. First, then, as to the strength of the wine. Behold the crater in which there are three Naiades to one Dionysos. He is a match for them, — not for more. No man shall put into his wine more water than the slaves have mixed. Yet if any man is so diffident of the god that he thinks three Naiades too much for him, he may omit one or two, and let the wine and the water fight it out upon equal terms. So much for the quality of the drink. As to quantity, it is a question to be deliberated hereafter. And now this cup to Zeus the Preserver."

The toast went round.

"Music, and the music of Lydia!" then shouted Antagoras, and resumed his place on the couch beside Uliades.

The music proceeded, the wines circled.

"Friend," whispered Uliades to the host, "thy father left thee wines, I know. But if thou givest many banquets like this, I doubt if thou wilt leave wines to thy son."

"I shall die childless, perhaps," answered the Chian; "and any friend will give me enough to pay Charon's fee across the Styx."

"That is a melancholy reflection," said Uliades, "and there

is no subject of talk that pleases me less than that same Styx. Why dost thou bite thy lip and choke the sigh? By the Gods! art thou not happy?"

"Happy!" repeated Antagoras, with a bitter smile. "Oh, yes!"

"Good! Cleonice torments thee no more. I myself have gone through thy trials, — ay, and oftentimes. Seven times at Samos, five at Rhodes, once at Miletus, and forty-three times at Corinth, have I been an impassioned and unsuccessful lover. Courage! I love still."

Antagoras turned away. By this time the hall was yet more crowded, for many not invited to the supper came, as was the custom with the Greeks, to the Symposium; but these were all of the Ionian race.

"The music is dull without the dancers," cried the host. "Ho, there! the dancing-girls. Now would I give all the rest of my wealth to see among these girls one face that yet but for a moment could make me forget —"

"Forget what, or whom?" said Uliades. "Not Cleonice?"

"Man, man, wilt thou provoke me to strangle thee?" muttered Antagoras.

Uliades edged himself away.

"Ungrateful!" he cried. "What are a hundred Byzantine girls to one tried male friend?"

"I will not be ungrateful, Uliades, if thou stand by my side against the Spartan."

"Thou art, then, bent upon this perilous hazard?"

"Bent on driving Pausanias from Byzantium or into Hades, — yes."

"Touch!" said Uliades, holding out his right hand. "By Cypris, but these girls dance like the daughters of Oceanus; every step undulates as a wave."

Antagoras motioned to his cup-bearer. "Tell the leader of that dancing choir to come hither." The cup-bearer obeyed.

A man with a solemn air came to the foot of the Chian's couch, bowing low. He was an Egyptian, — one of the meanest castes.

"Swarthy friend," said Antagoras, "didst thou ever hear of the Pyrrhic dance of the Spartans?"

"Surely; of all dances am I teacher and preceptor."

"Your girls know it, then?"

"Somewhat, from having seen it; but not from practice. 'Tis a male dance and a warlike dance, O magnanimous, but, in this instance, untutored, Chian!"

"Hist! and listen." Antagoras whispered. The Egyptian nodded his head, returned to the dancing-girls, and when their measure had ceased, gathered them round him.

Antagoras again rose.

"Companions, we are bound now to do homage to our masters,— the pleasant, affable, and familiar warriors of Sparta."

At this the guests gave way to their applauding laughter.

"And therefore the delicate maidens will present to us that flowing and Amathusian dance which the Graces taught to Spartan sinews. Ho, there! begin."

The Egyptian had by this time told the dancers what they were expected to do; and they came forward with an affectation of stern dignity, the burlesque humour of which delighted all those lively revellers. And when, with adroit mimicry, their slight arms and mincing steps mocked that grand and masculine measure so associated with images of Spartan austerity and decorum, the exhibition became so humourously ludicrous that perhaps a Spartan himself would have been compelled to laugh at it. But the merriment rose to its height when the Egyptian, who had withdrawn for a few minutes, reappeared with a Median robe and mitred cap, and calling out in his barbarous African accent, "Way for the conqueror!" threw into his mien and gestures all the likeness to Pausanias himself which a practised mime and posture-master could attain. The laughter of Antagoras alone was not loud,— it was low and sullen, as if sobs of rage were stifling it; but his eye watched the effect produced, and it answered the end he had in view.

As the dancers now, while the laughter was at its loudest roar, vanished behind the draperies, the host rose, and his countenance was severe and grave, —

"Companions, one cup more, and let it be to Harmodius and Aristogiton! Let the song in their honour come only from the lips of free citizens, of our Ionian comrades. Uliades, begin. I pass to thee a myrtle-bough; and under it I pass a sword."

Then he began the famous hymn ascribed to Callistratus, commencing with a clear and sonorous voice, and the guests repeating each stanza after him, with the enthusiasm which the words usually produced among the Hellenic republicans:—

"I in a myrtle-bough the sword will carry,
As did Harmodius and Aristogiton
When they the tyrant slew,
And back to Athens gave her equal laws.

"Thou art in nowise dead, best-loved Harmodius;
Isles of the Blessed are, they say, thy dwelling.
There swift Achilles dwells,
And there, they say, with thee dwells Diomed.

"I in a myrtle-bough the sword will carry,
As did Harmodius and Aristogiton
When to Athene's shrine
They gave their sacrifice, — a tyrant man.

"Ever on earth for both of you lives glory,
O loved Harmodius, loved Aristogiton;
For ye the tyrant slew,
And back to Athens ye gave equal laws."

When the song had ceased, the dancers, the musicians, the attendant slaves, had withdrawn from the hall, dismissed by a whispered order from Antagoras.

He, now standing up, took from his brows the floral crown, and first sprinkling them with wine, replaced the flowers by a wreath of poplar. The assembly, a little while before so noisy, was hushed into attentive and earnest silence. The action of Antagoras, the expression of his countenance, the exclusion of the slaves, prepared all present for something more than the convivial address of a Symposiarch.

"Men and Greeks," said the Chian, "on the evening before

Teucer led his comrades in exile over the wide waters to found a second Salamis, he sprinkled his forehead with Lyæan dews, being crowned with the poplar-leaves, — emblems of hardihood and contest; and, this done, he invited his companions to dispel their cares for the night, that their hearts might with more cheerful hope and bolder courage meet what the morrow might bring to them on the ocean. I imitate the ancient hero, in honour less of him than of the name of Salamis. We, too, have a Salamis to remember, and a second Salamis to found. Can ye forget that, had the advice of the Spartan leader Eurybiades been adopted, the victory of Salamis would never have been achieved? He was for retreat to the Isthmus; he was for defending the Peloponnese, because in the Peloponnesus was the unsocial, selfish Sparta, and leaving the rest of Hellas to the armament of Xerxes. Themistocles spoke against the ignoble counsel; the Spartan raised his staff to strike him, — ye know the Spartan manners. ‘Strike if you will, but hear me,’ cried Themistocles. He was heard, Xerxes was defeated, and Hellas saved. I am not Themistocles, nor is there a Spartan staff to silence free lips. But I too say, ‘Hear me!’ for a new Salamis is to be won. What was the former Salamis? The victory that secured independence to the Greeks, and delivered them from the Mede and the medizing traitors. Again we must fight a Salamis. Where, ye say, is the Mede? Not at Byzantium, it is true, in person, but the medizing traitor is here.”

A profound sensation thrilled through the assembly.

“Enough of humility do the maritime Ionians practise when they accept the hegemony of a Spartan landsman; enough of submission do the free citizens of Hellas show when they suffer the imperious Dorian to sentence them to punishments only fit for slaves. But when the Spartan appears in the robes of the Mede; when the imperious Dorian places in the government of a city, which our joint arms now occupy, a recreant who has changed an Eretrian birthright for a Persian satrapy; when prisoners, made by the valour of all Hellas, mysteriously escape the care of the Lacedæmonian who wears

their garb and imitates their manners, — say, O ye Greeks, O ye warriors, if there is no second Salamis to conquer!”

The animated words, and the wine already drunk, produced on the banqueters an effect sudden, electrical, universal. They had come to the hall gay revellers; they were prepared to leave the hall stern conspirators.

Their hoarse murmur was as the voice of the sea before a storm.

Antagoras surveyed them with a fierce joy, and with a change of tone thus continued: “Ye understand me, ye know already that a delivery is to be achieved. I pass on; I submit to your wisdom the mode of achieving it. While I speak, a swift-sailing vessel bears to Sparta the complaints of myself, of Uliades, and of many Ionian captains here present, against the Spartan general. And although the Athenian chiefs decline to proffer complaints of their own, lest their State, which has risked so much for the common cause, be suspected of using the admiration it excites for the purpose of subserving its ambition, yet Cimon, the young son of the great Miltiades, who has ties of friendship and hospitality with families of high mark in Sparta, has been persuaded to add to our public statement a private letter to the effect that, speaking for himself, not in the name of Athens, he deems our complaints justly founded, and the recall of Pausanias expedient for the discipline of the armament. But can we say what effect this embassy may have upon a sullen and haughty government; against, too, a royal descendant of Hercules; against the general who at Plataea flattered Sparta with a renown to which her absence from Marathon, and her meditated flight from Salamis, gave but disputable pretensions?”

“And,” interrupted Uliades, rising, “and — if, O Antagoras, I may crave pardon for standing a moment between thee and thy guests — and this is not all; for even if they recall Pausanias, they may send us another general as bad, and without the fame which somewhat reconciles our Ionian pride to the hegemony of a Dorian. Now, whatever my quarrel with Pausanias I am less against a man than a principle. I am a seaman, and against the principle of having for the

commander of the Greek fleet a Spartan who does not know how to handle a sail. I am an Ionian, and against the principle of placing the Ionian race under the imperious domination of a Dorian. Therefore I say, now is the moment to emancipate our blood and our ocean, — the one from an alien, the other from a landsman. And the hegemony of the Spartan should pass away."

Uliades sat down with an applause more clamorous than had greeted the eloquence of Antagoras, for the pride of race and of special calling is ever more strong in its impulses than hatred to a single man. And despite of all that could be said against Pausanias, still these warriors felt awe for his greatness, and remembered that at Plataea, where all were brave, he had been proclaimed the bravest.

Antagoras, with the quickness of a republican Greek trained from earliest youth to sympathy with popular assemblies, saw that Uliades had touched the right key, and swallowed down with a passionate gulp his personal wrath against his rival, which might otherwise have been carried too far, and have lost him the advantage he had gained.

"Rightly and wisely speaks Uliades," said he. "Our cause is that of our whole race; and clear has that true Samian made it to you all, O Ionians and captains of the seas, that we must not wait for the lordly answer Sparta may return to our embassy. Ye know that while night lasts, we must return to our several vessels; an hour more, and we shall be on deck. To-morrow Pausanias reviews the fleet, and we may be some days before we return to land and can meet in concert. Whether to-morrow or later the occasion for action may present itself, is a question I would pray you to leave to those whom you intrust with the discretionary power to act."

"How act?" cried a Lesbian officer.

"Thus would I suggest," said Antagoras, with well-dissembled humility: "let the captains of one or more Ionian vessels perform such a deed of open defiance against Pausanias as leaves to them no option between death and success; having so done, hoist a signal, and sailing at once to the Athenian ships, place themselves under the Athenian leader;

all the rest of the Ionian captains will then follow their example. And then, too numerous and too powerful to be punished for a revolt, we shall proclaim a revolution, and declare that we will all sail back to our native havens unless we have the liberty of choosing our own hegemon."

"But," said the Lesbian who had before spoken, "the Athenians as yet have held back and declined our overtures, and without them we are not strong enough to cope with the Peloponnesian allies."

"The Athenians will be compelled to protect the Ionians, if the Ionians in sufficient force demand it," said Uliades. "For as we are nought without them, they are nought without us. Take the course suggested by Antagoras: I advise it. Ye know me, a plain man; but I speak not without warrant. And before the Spartans can either contemptuously dismiss our embassy or send us out another general, the Ionian will be the mistress of the Hellenic seas, and Sparta, the land of oligarchies, will no more have the power to oligarchize democracy. Otherwise, believe me, that power she has now from her hegemony, and that power, whenever it suit her, she will use."

Uliades was chiefly popular in the fleet as a rough, good seaman, as a blunt and somewhat vulgar humourist. But whenever he gave advice, the advice carried with it a weight not always bestowed upon superior genius, because, from the very commonness of his nature, he reached at the common sense and the common feelings of those whom he addressed. He spoke, in short, what an ordinary man thought and felt. He was a practical man, brave but not over-audacious, not likely to run himself or others into idle dangers, and when he said he had a warrant for his advice, he was believed to speak from his knowledge of the course which the Athenian chiefs, Aristides and Cimon, would pursue if the plan recommended were actively executed.

"I am convinced," said the Lesbian. "And since all are grateful to Athens for that final stand against the Mede to which all Greece owes her liberties, and since the chief of her armaments here is a man of so modest a virtue and so element

a justice as we all acknowledge in Aristides, fitting is it for us Ionians to constitute Athens the maritime sovereign of our race."

"Are ye all of that mind?" cried Antagoras, and was answered by the universal shout, "We are, — all!" or if the shout was not universal, none heeded the few whom fear or prudence might keep silent. "All that remains, then, is to appoint the captain who shall hazard the first danger and make the first signal. For my part, as one of the electors I give my vote for Uliades, and this is my ballot." He took from his temples the poplar wreath, and cast it into a silver vase on the tripod placed before him.

"Uliades by acclamation!" cried several voices.

"I accept," said the Ionian; "and as Ulysses, a prudent man, asked for a colleague in enterprises of danger, so I ask for a companion in the hazard I undertake, and I select Antagoras."

This choice received the same applauding acquiescence as that which had greeted the nomination of the Ionian. And in the midst of the applause was heard without the sharp, shrill sound of the Phrygian pipe.

"Comrades," said Antagoras, "ye hear the summons to our ships? Our boats are waiting at the steps of the quay, by the Temple of Neptune. Two sentences more, and then to sea. First, silence and fidelity; the finger to the lip, the right hand raised to Zeus Horkios. For a pledge, here is an oath. Secondly, be this the signal: whenever ye shall see Uliades and myself steer our triremes out of the line in which they may be marshalled, look forth and watch breathless, and the instant you perceive that beside our flags of Samos and Chios we hoist the ensign of Athens, draw off from your stations, and follow the wake of our keels, to the Athenian navy. Then, as the Gods direct us. Hark, a second time shrills the fife."

CHAPTER V.

At the very hour when the Ionian captains were hurrying towards their boats, Pausanias was pacing his decks alone, with irregular strides, and through the cordage and the masts the starshine came fitfully on his troubled features. Long undecided, he paused, as the waves sparkled to the stroke of oars, and beheld the boats of the feasters making towards the division of the fleet in which lay the navy of the isles. Farther on, remote and still, anchored the ships of Athens. He clenched his hand, and turned from the sight.

"To lose an empire," he muttered, "and without a struggle, — an empire over yon mutinous rivals, over yon happy and envied Athens; an empire, — where its limits? If Asia puts her armies to my lead, why should not Asia be hellenized, rather than Hellas be within the tribute of the Mede? Dull, dull, stolid Sparta, methinks I could pardon the slavery thou inflictest on my life, didst thou but leave unshackled my intelligence. But each vast scheme to be thwarted, every thought for thine own aggrandizement beyond thy barren rocks met and inexorably baffled by a selfish aphorism, a cramping saw, — 'Sparta is wide enough for Spartans.' 'Ocean is the element of the fickle.' 'What matters the ascendancy of Athens? It does not cross the Isthmus.' 'Venture nothing where I want nothing.' Why, this is the soul's prison! Ah, had I been born Athenian, I had never uttered a thought against my country. She and I would have expanded and aspired together."

Thus arguing with himself, he at length confirmed his resolve, and with a steadfast step entered his pavilion. There, not on brodered cushions, but by preference on the hard floor, without coverlid, lay Lysander calmly sleeping, his crimson warlike cloak, weather-stained, partially wrapped around him; no pillow to his head but his own right arm.

By the light of the high lamp that stood within the pavilion, Pausanias contemplated the slumberer.

"He says he loves me, and yet can sleep," he murmured bitterly. Then, seating himself before a table, he began to write, with slowness and precision, whether as one not accustomed to the task, or weighing every word.

When he had concluded, he again turned his eyes to the sleeper. "How tranquil! Was my sleep ever as serene? I will not disturb him to the last."

The fold of the curtain was drawn aside, and Alcman entered noiselessly.

"Thou hast obeyed?" whispered Pausanias.

"Yes; the ship is ready, the wind favours. Hast thou decided?"

"I have," said Pausanias, with compressed lips.

He rose, and touched Lysander lightly; but the touch sufficed, the sleeper woke on the instant, casting aside slumber easily as a garment.

"My Pausanias," said the young Spartan, "I am at thine orders, — shall I go? Alas! I read thine eye, and I shall leave thee in peril."

"Greater peril in the council of the ephors and in the babbling lips of the hoary Gerontes, than amidst the meeting of armaments. Thou wilt take this letter to the ephors. I have said in it but little; I have said that I confide my cause to thee. Remember that thou insist on the disgrace to me, — the Heracleid, and through me to Sparta, that my recall would occasion; remember that thou prove that my alleged harshness is but necessary to the discipline that preserves armies and to the ascendancy of Spartan rule. And as to the idle tale of Persian prisoners escaped, why thou knowest how even the Ionians could make nothing of that charge. Crowd all sail, strain every oar; no ship in the fleet so swift as that which bears thee. I care not for the few hours' start the tale-bearers have. Our Spartan forms are slow; they can scarce have an audience ere thou reach. The Gods speed and guard thee, beloved friend! With thee goes all the future of Pausanias."

Lysander grasped his hand in a silence more eloquent than words, and a tear fell on that hand which he clasped. "Be not ashamed of it," he said then, as he turned away, and, wrapping his cloak round his face, left the pavilion. Alcman followed, lowered a boat from the side, and in a few moments the Spartan and the Mothon were on the sea. The boat made to a vessel close at hand, — a vessel built in Cyprus, manned by Bithynians; its sails were all up, but it bore no flag. Scarcely had Lysander climbed the deck than it heaved to and fro, swaying as the anchor was drawn up, then, righting itself, sprang forward like a hound unleashed for the chase. Pausanias with folded arms stood on the deck of his own vessel gazing after it, gazing long, till, shooting far beyond the fleet, far towards the melting line between sea and sky, it grew less and lesser, and as the twilight dawned, it had faded into space.

The Heracleid turned to Alcman, who, after he had conveyed Lysander to the ship, had regained his master's side.

"What thinkest thou, Alcman, will be the result of all this?"

"The emancipation of the Helots," said the Mothon, quietly. "The Athenians are too near thee, the Persians are too far. Wouldst thou have armies Sparta can neither give nor take away from thee, bind to thee a race by the strongest of human ties, — make them see in thy power the necessary condition of their freedom."

Pausanias made no answer. He turned within his pavilion, and flinging himself down on the same spot from which he had disturbed Lysander, said, "Sleep here was so kind to him that it may linger where he left it. I have two hours yet for oblivion before the sun rise."

CHAPTER VI.

IF we were enabled minutely to examine the mental organization of men who have risked great dangers, whether by the impulse of virtue or in the perpetration of crime, we should probably find therein a large preponderance of hope. By that preponderance we should account for those heroic designs which would annihilate prudence as a calculator, did not a sanguine confidence in the results produce special energies to achieve them, and thus create a prudence of its own, being, as it were, the self-conscious admeasurement of the diviner strength which justified the preterhuman spring. Nor less should we account by the same cause for that audacity which startles us in criminals on a colossal scale, which blinds them to the risks of detection, and often at the bar of justice, while the evidences that insure condemnation are thickening round them, with the persuasion of acquittal or escape. Hope is thus alike the sublime inspirer or the arch corrupter, — it is the foe of terror, the defier of consequences, the buoyant gamester which at every loss doubles the stakes, with a firm hand rattles the dice, and, invoking ruin, cries within itself, "How shall I expend the gain?"

In the character, therefore, of a man like Pausanias, risking so much glory, daring so much peril, strong indeed must have been this sanguine motive power of human action. Nor is a large and active development of hope incompatible with a temperament habitually grave and often profoundly melancholy; for hope itself is often engendered by discontent. A vigorous nature keenly susceptible to joy, and deprived of the possession of the joy it yearns for by circumstances that surround it in the present, is goaded on by its impatience and dissatisfaction; it hopes for the something it has not got, indifferent to the things it possesses, and saddened by the

want which it experiences. And therefore it has been well said by philosophers that real happiness would exclude desire; in other words, not only at the gates of hell, but at the porch of heaven, he who entered would leave hope behind him. For perfect bliss is but supreme content. And if content could say to itself, "But I hope for something more," it would destroy its own existence.

From his brief slumber the Spartan rose refreshed. The trumpets were sounding near him, and the very sound brightened his aspect and animated his spirits.

Agreeably to orders he had given the night before, the anchor was raised, the rowers were on their benches, the libation to the Carnean Apollo, under whose special protection the ship was placed, had been poured forth, and with the rising sea and to the blare of trumpets the gorgeous trireme moved forth from the bay.

It moved, as the trumpets ceased, to the note of a sweeter, but not less exciting, music; for, according to Hellenic custom, to the rowers was allotted a musician, with whose harmony their oars, when first putting forth to sea, kept time. And on this occasion Aleman superseded the wonted performer by his own more popular song and the melody of his richer voice. Standing by the mainmast, and holding the large harp, which was stricken by the quill, its strings being deepened by a sounding-board, he chanted an *Io Pæan* to the Dorian god of light and poesy. The harp at stated intervals was supported by a burst of flutes, and the burden of the verse was caught up by the rowers as in chorus. Thus, far and wide over the shining waves, went forth the hymn.

"*Io, Io Pæan!* slowly. Song and oar must chime together:

Io, Io Pæan! by what title call Apollo?

Clarian? Xanthian? Boëdromian?

Countless are thy names, Apollo.

Io Carnæe! Io Carnæe!

By the margent of Eurotas,

'Neath the shadows of Taygetus,

Thee the sons of Lacedæmon

Name Carneus. *Io, Io!*

Io Carnæe! Io Carnæe!

"Io, Io Pæan! quicker. Song and voice must chime together;
Io Pæan! Io Pæan! King Apollo, Io, Io!
Io Carnæe!

For thine altars do the seasons
Paint the tributary flowers,
Spring thy hyacinth restores,
Summer greets thee with the rose,
Autumn the blue Cyane mingles
With the coronals of corn,
And in every wreath thy laurel
Weaves its everlasting green.
Io Carnæe! Io Carnæe!
For the brows Apollo favours
Spring and winter does the laurel
Weave its everlasting green.

"Io, Io Pæan! louder. Voice and oar must chime together;
For the brows Apollo favours
Even Ocean bears the laurel.
Io Carnæe! Io Carnæe!

"Io, Io Pæan! stronger. Strong are those who win the laurel."

As the ship of the Spartan commander thus bore out to sea, the other vessels of the armament had been gradually forming themselves into a crescent, preserving still the order in which the allies maintained their several contributions to the fleet, the Athenian ships at the extreme end occupying the right wing, the Peloponnesians massed together at the left.

The Chian galleys adjoined the Samian; for Uliades and Antagoras had contrived that their ships should be close to each other, so that they might take counsel at any moment, and act in concert.

And now, when the fleet had thus opened its arms, as it were, to receive the commander, the great trireme of Pausanias began to veer round and to approach the half-moon of the expanded armament. On it came, with its beaked prow, like a falcon swooping down on some array of the lesser birds.

From the stern hung a gilded shield and a crimson pennon. The heavy-armed soldiers in their Spartan mail occupied the centre of the vessel, and the sun shone full upon their armour.

"By Pallas the Guardian," said Cimon, "it is the Athenian vessels that the strategus honours with his first visit."

And indeed the Spartan galley now came alongside that of Aristides, the admiral of the Athenian navy.

The soldiers on board the former gave way on either side, and a murmur of admiration circled through the Athenian ship as Pausanias suddenly appeared; for as if bent that day on either awing mutiny or conciliating the discontented, the Spartan chief had wisely laid aside the wondrous Median robes. He stood on her stern in the armour he had worn at Plataea, resting one hand upon his shield, which itself rested on the deck. His head alone was uncovered, his long sable locks gathered up into a knot, in the Spartan fashion, — a crest, as it were, in itself to that lofty head. And so imposing were his whole air and carriage that Cimon, gazing at him, muttered, "What profane hand will dare to rob that demigod of command?"

CHAPTER VII.

PAUSANIAS came on board the vessel of the Athenian admiral, attended by the five Spartan chiefs who have been mentioned before as the warlike companions assigned to him. He relaxed the haughty demeanour which had given so much displeasure, adopting a tone of marked courtesy. He spoke with high and merited praise of the seaman-like appearance of the Athenian crews, and the admirable build and equipment of their vessels.

"Pity only," said he, smiling, "that we have no Persians on the ocean now, and that instead of their visiting us we must go in search of them."

"Would that be wise on our part?" said Aristides. "Is not Greece large enough for Greeks?"

"Greece has not done growing," answered the Spartan; "and the Gods forbid that she should do so. When man

ceases to grow in height, he expands in bulk; when he stops there too, the frame begins to stoop, the muscles to shrink, the skin to shrivel, and decrepit old age steals on. I have heard it said of the Athenians that they think nothing done while aught remains to do. Is it not truly said, worthy son of Miltiades?"

Cimon bowed his head. "General, I cannot disavow the sentiment. But if Greece entered Asia, would it not be as a river that runs into a sea? It expands, and is merged."

"The river, Cimon, may lose the sweetness of its wave and take the brine of the sea; but the Greek can never lose the flavour of the Greek genius, and could he penetrate the universe, the universe would be hellenized. But if, O Athenian chiefs, ye judge that we have now done all that is needful to protect Athens and awe the Barbarian, ye must be longing to retire from the armament and return to your homes."

"When it is fit that we should return, we shall be recalled," said Aristides, quietly.

"What, is your State so unerring in its judgment? Experience does not permit me to think so, for it ostracized Aristides."

"An honour," replied the Athenian, "that I did not deserve, but an action that, had I been the adviser of those who sent me forth, I should have opposed as too lenient. Instead of ostracizing me, they should have cast both myself and Themistocles into the Barathrum."

"You speak with true Attic honour, and I comprehend that where, in commonwealths constituted like yours, party runs high, and the State itself is shaken, ostracism may be a necessary tribute to the very virtues that attract the zeal of a party and imperil the equality ye so prize. But what can compensate to a State for the evil of depriving itself of its greatest citizens?"

"Peace and freedom," said Aristides. "If you would have the young trees thrive, you must not let one tree be so large as to overshadow them. Ah, general at Plataea," added the Athenian, in a benignant whisper, for the grand image before him moved his heart with a mingled feeling of generous admi-

ration and prophetic pity, "ah, pardon me if I remind thee of the ring of Polycrates, and say that Fortune is a queen that requires tribute. Man should tremble most when most seemingly fortune-favoured, and guard most against a fall when his rise is at the highest."

"But it is only at its highest flight that the eagle is safe from the arrow," answered Pausanias.

"And the nest the eagle has forgotten in her soaring is the more exposed to the spoiler."

"Well, my nest is in rocky Sparta; hardy the spoiler who ventures thither. Yet, to descend from these speculative comparisons, it seems that thou hast a friendly and meaning purpose in thy warnings. Thou knowest that there are in this armament men who grudge to me whatever I now owe to Fortune, who would topple me from the height to which I did not climb, but was led by the congregated Greeks, and who, while perhaps they are forging arrow-heads for the eagle, have sent to place poison and a snare in its distant nest. So the 'Nausicaa' is on its voyage to Sparta, conveying to the ephors complaints against me, — complaints from men who fought by my side against the Mede."

"I have heard that a Cyprian vessel left the fleet yesterday, bound to Laconia. I have heard that it does bear men charged by some of the Ionians with representations unfavourable to the continuance of thy command. It bears none from me as the Nauarchus of the Athenians; but —"

"But what?"

"But I have complained to thyself, Pausanias, in vain."

"Hast thou complained of late and in vain?"

"Nay."

"Honest men may err; if they amend, do just men continue to accuse?"

"I do not accuse, Pausanias, I but imply that those who do may have a cause; but it will be heard before a tribunal of thine own countrymen, and doubtless thou hast sent to the tribunal those who may meet the charge on thy behalf."

"Well," said Pausanias, still preserving his studied urbanity and lofty smile, "even Agamemnon and Achilles quar-

relled, but Greece took Troy not the less. And at least, since Aristides does not denounce me, if I have committed even worse faults than Agamemnon, I have not made an enemy of Achilles. And if," he added after a pause, — "if some of these Ionians, not waiting for the return of their envoys, openly mutiny, they must be treated as Thersites was." Then he hurried on quickly; for observing that Cimon's brow lowered, and his lips quivered, he desired to cut off all words that might lead to altercation.

"But I have a request to ask of the Athenian Nauarchus. Will you gratify myself and the fleet by putting your Athenian triremes into play? Your seamen are so famous for their manœuvres that they might furnish us with sports of more grace and agility than do the Lydian dancers. Landsman though I be, no sight more glads mine eye than these sea-lions of pine and brass, bounding under the yoke of their tamers. I presume not to give thee instructions what to perform. Who can dictate to the seamen of Salamis? But when your ships have played out their martial sport, let them exchange stations with the Peloponnesian vessels, and occupy for the present the left of the armament. Ye object not?"

"Place us where thou wilt, as was said to thee at Plataea," answered Aristides.

"I now leave you to prepare, Athenians, and greet you, saying, the Good to the Beautiful."

"A wondrous presence for a Greek commander!" said Cimon, as Pausanias again stood on the stern of his own vessel, which moved off towards the ships of the islands.

"And no mean capacity," returned Aristides. "See you not his object in transplacing us?"

"Ha! truly; in case of mutiny on board the Ionian ships, he separates them from Athens. But woe to him if he thinks in his heart that an Ionian is a Thersites, to be silenced by the blow of a sceptre. Meanwhile let the Greeks see what manner of seamen are the Athenians. Methinks this game ordained to us is a contest before Neptune, and for a crown."

Pausanias bore right on towards the vessels from the *Ægean Isles*. Their masts and prows were heavy with gar-

lands, but no music sounded from their decks, no welcoming shout from their crews.

"Son of Cleombrotus," said the prudent Erasinidas, "sullen dogs bite; unwise the stranger who trusts himself to their kennel. Pass not to those triremes; let the captains, if thou wantest them, come to thee."

Pausanias replied: "Dogs fear the steady eye, and spring at the recreant back. Helmsman, steer to yonder ship with the olive-tree on the Parasemon, and the image of Bacchus on the guardian standard. It is the ship of Antagoras the Chian captain."

Pausanias turned to his warlike Five. "This time, forgive me; I go alone." And before their natural Spartan slowness enabled them to combat this resolution, their leader was by the side of his rival, alone in the Chian vessel, and surrounded by his sworn foes.

"Antagoras," said the Spartan, "a Chian seaman's ship is his dearest home. I stand on thy deck as at thy hearth, and ask thy hospitality: a crust of thy honied bread, and a cup of thy Chian wine. For from thy ship I would see the Athenian vessels go through their nautical gymnastics."

The Chian turned pale and trembled; his vengeance was braved and foiled. He was powerless against the man who trusted to his honour, and asked to break of his bread and drink of his cup. Pausanias did not appear to heed the embarrassment of his unwilling host, but turning round, addressed some careless words to the soldiers on the raised central platform, and then quietly seated himself, directing his eyes towards the Athenian ships. Upon these all the sails were now lowered. In nice manœuvres the seamen preferred trusting to their oars. Presently one vessel started forth, and with a swiftness that seemed to increase at every stroke.

A table was brought upon deck and placed before Pausanias, and the slaves began to serve to him such light food as sufficed to furnish the customary meal of the Greeks in the earlier forenoon.

"But where is mine host?" asked the Spartan. "Does

Antagoras himself not deign to share a meal with his guest?"

On receiving the message, Antagoras had no option but to come forward. The Spartan eyed him deliberately, and the young Chian felt with secret rage the magic of that commanding eye.

Pausanias motioned to him to be seated, making room beside himself. The Chian silently obeyed.

"Antagoras," said the Spartan in a low voice, "thou art doubtless one of those who have already infringed the laws of military discipline and obedience. Interrupt me not yet. A vessel, without waiting my permission, has left the fleet with accusations against me, thy commander; of what nature I am not even advised. Thou wilt scarcely deny that thou art one of those who sent forth the ship and shared in the accusations. Yet I had thought that if I had ever merited thine ill-will, there had been reconciliation between us in the Council Hall. What has chanced since? Why shouldst thou hate me? Speak frankly; frankly have I spoken to thee."

"General," replied Antagoras, "there is no hegemony over men's hearts; thou sayest truly, as man to man, I hate thee. Wherefore? Because, as man to man, thou standest between me and happiness. Because thou wooest, and canst only woo to dishonour, the virgin in whom I would seek the sacred wife."

Pausanias slightly recoiled, and the courtesy he had simulated, and which was essentially foreign to his vehement and haughty character, fell from him like a mask; for with the words of Antagoras, jealousy passed within him, and for the moment its agony was such that the Chian was avenged. But he was too habituated to the stateliness of self-control to give vent to the rage that seized him. He only said with a whitened and writhing lip, "Thou art right; all animosities may yield, save those which a woman's eye can kindle. Thou hatest me, — be it so; that is as man to man. But as officer to chieftain, I bid thee henceforth beware how thou givest me cause to set this foot on the head that lifts itself to the height of mine."

With that he rose, turned on his heel, and walked towards

the stern, where he stood apart gazing on the Athenian triremes, which by this time were in the broad sea. And all the eyes in the fleet were turned towards that exhibition; for marvellous was the ease and beauty with which these ships went through their nautical movements: now as in chase of each other, now approaching as in conflict, veering off, darting aside, threading as it were a harmonious maze, gliding in and out, here, there, with the undulous celerity of the serpent. The admirable build of the ships; the perfect skill of the seamen; the noiseless docility and instinctive comprehension by which they seemed to seize and to obey the unforeseen signals of their admiral, — all struck the lively Greeks that beheld the display, and universal was the thought, if not the murmur, "There was the power that should command the Grecian seas."

Pausanias was too much accustomed to the sway of masses not to have acquired that electric knowledge of what circles amongst them from breast to breast, to which habit gives the quickness of an instinct. He saw that he had committed an imprudence, and that in seeking to divert a mutiny, he had incurred a yet greater peril.

He returned to his own ship without exchanging another word with Antagoras, who had retired to the centre of the vessel, fearing to trust himself to a premature utterance of that defiance which the last warning of his chief provoked, and who was therefore arousing the soldiers to louder shouts of admiration at the Athenian skill.

Rowing back towards the wing occupied by the Peloponnesian allies, of whose loyalty he was assured, Pausanias then summoned on board their principal officer, and communicated to him his policy of placing the Ionians not only apart from the Athenians, but under the vigilance and control of Peloponnesian vessels in the immediate neighbourhood. "Therefore," said he, "while the Athenians will occupy this wing, I wish you to divide yourselves: the Lacedæmonian ships will take the way the Athenians abandon; but the Corinthian triremes will place themselves between the ships of the Islands and the Athenians. I shall give further orders towards dis-

tributing the Ionian navy. And thus I trust either all chance of a mutiny is cut off, or it will be put down at the first outbreak. Now give orders to your men to take the places thus assigned to you. And having gratified the vanity of our friends the Athenians by their holiday evolutions, I shall send to thank and release them from the fatigue so gracefully borne."

All those with whom he here conferred, and who had no love for Athens or Ionia, readily fell into the plan suggested. Pausanias then despatched a Laconian vessel to the Athenian admiral, with complimentary messages and orders to cease the manœuvres, and then, heading the rest of the Laconian contingent, made slow and stately way towards the station deserted by the Athenians. But pausing once more before the vessels of the Isles, he despatched orders to their several commanders, which had the effect of dividing their array and placing between them the powerful Corinthian service. In the orders of the vessels he forwarded for this change he took especial care to dislocate the dangerous contiguity of the Samian and Chian triremes.

The sun was declining towards the west when Pausanias had marshalled the vessels he headed, at their new stations, and the Athenian ships were already anchored close and secured. But there was an evident commotion in that part of the fleet to which the Corinthian galleys had sailed. The Ionians had received with indignant murmurs the command which divided their strength. Under various pretexts each vessel delayed to move; and when the Corinthian ships came to take a vacant space, they found a formidable array, — the soldiers on the platforms armed to the teeth. The confusion was visible to the Spartan chief; the loud hubbub almost reached to his ears. He hastened towards the place; but anxious to continue the gracious part he had so unwontedly played that day, he cleared his decks of their formidable hoplites, lest he might seem to meet menace by menace, and drafting them into other vessels, and accompanied only by his personal serving-men and rowers, he put forth alone, the gilded shield and the red banner still displayed at his stern.

But as he was thus conspicuous and solitary, and midway in the space left between the Laconian and Ionian galleys, suddenly two ships from the latter darted forth, passed through the centre of the Corinthian contingent, and steered with the force of all their rowers right towards the Spartan's ship.

"Surely," said Pausanias, "that is the Chian's vessel, — I recognize the vine-tree and the image of the Bromian god; and surely that other one is the 'Chimera,' under Uliades the Samian. They come hither, the Ionian with them, to harangue against obedience to my orders."

"They come hither to assault us," exclaimed Erasinidas; "their beaks are right upon us."

He had scarcely spoken, when the Chian's brass prow smote the gilded shield, and rent the red banner from its staff. At the same time the "Chimera," under Uliades, struck the right side of the Spartan ship, and with both strokes the stout vessel reeled and dived. "Know, Spartan," cried Antagoras, from the platform in the midst of his soldiers, "that we Ionians hold together. He who would separate, means to conquer us. We disown thy hegemony. If ye would seek us, we are with the Athenians."

With that the two vessels, having performed their insolent and daring feat, veered and shot off with the same rapidity with which they had come to the assault; and as they did so, hoisted the Athenian ensign over their own national standards. The instant that signal was given, from the other Ionian vessels, which had been evidently awaiting it, there came a simultaneous shout; and all, vacating their place and either gliding through or wheeling round the Corinthian galleys, steered towards the Athenian fleet.

The trireme of Pausanias, meanwhile, sorely damaged, part of its side rent away, and the water rushing in, swayed and struggled alone in great peril of sinking.

Instead of pursuing the Ionians, the Corinthian galleys made at once to the aid of the insulted commander.

"Oh," cried Pausanias, in powerless wrath, "Oh, the accursed element! Oh that mine enemies had attacked me on the land!"

"How are we to act?" said Aristides.

"We are citizens of a republic, in which the majority govern," answered Cimon; "and the majority here tell us how we are to act. Hark to the shouts of our men as they are opening way for their kinsmen of the Isles."

The sun sank, and with it sank the Spartan maritime ascendancy over Hellas. And from that hour in which the Samian and the Chian insulted the galley of Pausanias, if we accord weight to the authority on which Plutarch must have based his tale, commenced the brief and glorious sovereignty of Athens. Commence when and how it might, it was an epoch most signal in the records of the ancient world for its results upon a civilization to which as yet human foresight can predict no end.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

WE pass from Byzantium, we are in Sparta. In the Archeion, or office of the ephoralty, sat five men, all somewhat advanced in years. These constituted that stern and terrible authority which had gradually, and from unknown beginnings,¹ assumed a kind of tyranny over the descendants of Hercules themselves. They were the representatives of the Spartan people, elected without reference to rank or wealth,² and possessing jurisdiction not only over the Helots and Laconians, but over most of the magistrates. They could suspend or terminate any office, they could accuse the kings and bring them before a court, in which they themselves were judges, upon trial of life and death. They exercised control over the armies and the embassies sent abroad; and the king, at the head of his forces, was still bound to receive his instructions from this Council of Five. Their duty, in fact, was to act as a check upon the kings, and they were the representatives of that nobility which embraced the whole Spartan people, in contradistinction to the Laconians and Helots.

The conference in which they were engaged seemed to rivet their most earnest attention; and as the presiding ephor continued the observations he addressed to them, the rest listened with profound and almost breathless silence.

¹ K. O. Müller (Dorians), book 3, c. 7, § 2. According to Aristotle, Cicero, and others, the ephoralty was founded by Theopompus subsequently to the mythical time of Lycurgus. To Lycurgus himself it is referred by Xenophon and Herodotus. Müller considers rightly that, though an ancient Doric institution, it was incompatible with the primitive constitution of Lycurgus, and had gradually acquired its peculiar character by causes operating on the Spartan State alone.

² Aristotle, Politics, ii.

The speaker, named Periclides, was older than the others. His frame, still upright and sinewy, was yet lean almost to emaciation, his face sharp, and his dark eyes gleamed with a cunning and sinister light under his gray brows.

"If," said he, "we are to believe these Ionians, Pausanias meditates some deadly injury to Greece. As for the complaints of his arrogance, they are to be received with due caution. Our Spartans, accustomed to the peculiar discipline of the laws of Ægimius, rarely suit the humours of Ionians and innovators. The question to consider is not whether he has been too imperious towards Ionians, who were but the other day subjected to the Mede, but whether he can make the command he received from Sparta menacing to Sparta herself. We lend him iron, he hath holpen himself to gold."

"Besides the booty at Platæa, they say that he has amassed much plunder at Byzantium," said Zeuxidamus, one of the ephors, after a pause.

Periclides looked hard at the speaker, and the two men exchanged a significant glance.

"For my part," said a third, a man of a severe but noble countenance, the father of Lysander, and, what was not usual with the ephors, belonging to one of the highest families of Sparta, "I have always held that Sparta should limit its policy to self-defence; that, since the Persian invasion is over, we have no business with Byzantium. Let the busy Athenians obtain if they will the empire of the sea; the sea is no province of ours. All intercourse with foreigners, Asiatics and Ionians, enervates our men and corrupts our generals. Recall Pausanias; recall our Spartans. I have said."

"Recall Pausanias first," said Periclides, "and we shall then hear the truth, and decide what is best to be done."

"If he has medized, if he has conspired against Greece, let us accuse him to the death," said Agesilaus, Lysander's father.

"We may accuse, but it rests not with us to sentence," said Periclides, disapprovingly.

"And," said a fourth ephor, with a visible shudder, "what Spartan dare counsel sentence of death to the descendant of the Gods?"

"I dare," replied Agesilaus; "but provided only that the descendant of the Gods had counselled death to Greece. And for that reason, I say that I would not, without evidence the clearest, even harbour the thought that a Heracleid could meditate treason to his country."

Periclides felt the reproof and bit his lips.

"Besides," observed Zeuxidamus, "fines enrich the State."

Periclides nodded approvingly.

An expression of lofty contempt passed over the brow and lip of Agesilaus. But with national self-command, he replied gravely, and with equal laconic brevity, "If Pausanias hath committed a trivial error that a fine can expiate, so be it; but talk not of fines till ye acquit him of all treasonable connivance with the Mede."

At that moment an officer entered on the conclave, and approaching the presiding ephor, whispered in his ear.

"This is well," exclaimed Periclides, aloud. "A messenger from Pausanias himself. Your son Lysander has just arrived from Byzantium."

"My son!" exclaimed Agesilaus, eagerly; and then, checking himself, added calmly, "That is a sign no danger to Sparta threatened Byzantium when he left."

"Let him be admitted," said Periclides.

Lysander entered, and pausing at a little distance from the council board, inclined his head submissively to the ephors; save a rapid interchange of glances, no separate greeting took place between son and father.

"Thou art welcome," said Periclides. "Thou hast done thy duty since thou hast left the city. Virgins will praise thee as the brave man; age, more sober, is contented to say thou hast upheld the Spartan name, and thy father without shame may take thy hand."

A warm flush spread over the young man's face. He stepped forward with a quick step, his eyes beaming with joy. Calm and stately, his father rose, clasped the extended hand, then releasing his own, placed it an instant on his son's bended head, and reseated himself in silence.

"Thou camest straight from Pausanias?" said Periclides.

Lysander drew from his vest the despatch intrusted to him, and gave it to the presiding ephor. Periclides half rose, as if to take with more respect what had come from the hand of the son of Hercules.

"Withdraw, Lysander," he said, "and wait without while we deliberate on the contents herein."

Lysander obeyed, and returned to the outer chamber.

Here he was instantly surrounded by eager, though not noisy, groups. Some in that chamber were waiting on business connected with the civil jurisdiction of the ephors; some had gained admittance for the purpose of greeting their brave countryman and hearing news of the distant camp from one who had so lately quitted the great Pausanias. For men could talk without restraint of their general, though it was but with reserve and indirectly that they slid in some furtive question as to the health and safety of a brother or a son.

"My heart warms to be amongst you again," said the simple Spartan youth. "As I came through the defiles from the sea-coast, and saw on the height the gleam from the old Temple of Pallas Chalciæus, I said to myself, 'Blessed be the Gods that ordained me to live with Spartans or die with Sparta!'"

"Thou wilt see how much we shall make of thee, Lysander," cried a Spartan youth a little younger than himself, one of the superior tribe of the Hylleans. "We have heard of thee at Plateæ. It is said that had Pausanias not been there, thou wouldst have been called the bravest Greek in the armament."

"Hush!" said Lysander; "thy few years excuse thee, young friend. Save our general, we were all equals in the day of battle."

"So thinks not my sister Percalus," whispered the youth, archly; "scold her as thou dost me, if thou dare."

Lysander coloured, and replied in a voice that slightly trembled: "I cannot hope that thy sister interests herself in me. Nay, when I left Sparta I thought—" He checked himself.

"Thought what?"

"That among those who remained behind, Percalus might find her betrothed long before I returned."

"Among those who remained *behind!* Percalus! How meanly thou must think of her!"

Before Lysander could utter the eager assurance that he was very far from thinking meanly of Percalus, the other bystanders, impatient at this whispered colloquy, seized his attention with a volley of questions, to which he gave but curt and not very relevant answers, so much had the lad's few sentences disturbed the calm tenor of his existing self-possession. Nor did he quite regain his presence of mind until he was once more summoned into the presence of the ephors.

CHAPTER II.

THE communication of Pausanias had caused an animated discussion in the Council, and led to a strong division of opinion. But the faces of the ephors, rigid and composed, revealed nothing to guide the sagacity of Lysander as he re-entered the chamber. He himself by a strong effort had recovered the disturbance into which the words of the boy had thrown his mind, and he stood before the ephors intent upon the object of defending the name and fulfilling the commands of his chief. So reverent and grateful was the love that he bore to Pausanias that he scarcely permitted himself even to blame the deviations from Spartan austerity which he secretly mourned in his mind; and as to the grave guilt of treason to the Hellenic cause, he had never suffered the suspicion of it to rest upon an intellect that only failed to be penetrating where its sight was limited by discipline and affection. He felt that Pausanias had intrusted to him his defence, and though he would fain, in his secret heart, have beheld the regent once more in Sparta, yet he well knew that it was the duty of obedience and friendship to plead against the sentence of recall which was so dreaded by his chief.

With all his thoughts collected towards that end, he stood before the ephors, modest in demeanour, vigilant in purpose.

"Lysander," said Pericles, after a short pause, "we know thy affection to the regent, thy chosen friend; but we know also thy affection for thy native Sparta: where the two may come into conflict, it is, and it must be, thy country which will claim the preference. We charge thee, by virtue of our high powers and authority, to speak the truth on the questions we shall address to thee, without fear or favour."

Lysander bowed his head. "I am in presence of Sparta my mother, and Agesilaus my father. They know that I was not reared to lie to either."

"Thou say'st well. Now answer. Is it true that Pausanias wears the robes of the Mede?"

"It is true."

"And has he stated to thee his reasons?"

"Not only to me, but to others."

"What are they?"

"That in the mixed and half medized population of Byzantium, splendour of attire has become so associated with the notion of sovereign power that the Eastern dress and attributes of pomp are essential to authority, and that men bow before his tiara who might rebel against the helm and the horsehair. Outward signs have a value, O ephors, according to the notions men are brought up to attach to them."

"Good," said one of the ephors. "There is in this departure from our habits, be it right or wrong, no sign, then, of connivance with the Barbarian?"

"Connivance is a thing secret and concealed, and shuns all outward signs."

"But," said Pericles, "what say the other Spartan captains to this vain fashion, which savours not of the laws of Ægimius?"

"The first law of Ægimius commands us to fight and to die for the king or the chief who has kingly sway. The ephors may blame, but the soldier must not question."

"Thou speakest boldly for so young a man," said Pericles, harshly.

"I was commanded to speak the truth."

"Has Pausanias intrusted the command of Byzantium to Gongylus the Eretrian, who already holds four provinces under Xerxes?"

"He has done so."

"Know you the reason for that selection?"

"Pausanias says that the Eretrian could not more show his faith to Hellas than by resigning Eastern satrapies so vast."

"Has he resigned them?"

"I know not; but I presume that when the Persian king knows that the Eretrian is leagued against him with the other captains of Hellas, he will assign the satrapies to another."

"And is it true that the Persian prisoners, Ariamanes and Datis, have escaped from the custody of Gongylus?"

"It is true. The charge against Gongylus for that error was heard in a council of confederate captains, and no proof against him was brought forward. Cimon was intrusted with the pursuit of the prisoners. Pausanias himself sent forth fifty scouts on Thessalian horses. The prisoners were not discovered."

"Is it true," said Zeuxidamus, "that Pausanias has amassed much plunder at Byzantium?"

"What he has won as a conqueror was assigned to him by common voice; but he has spent largely out of his own resources in securing the Greek sway at Byzantium."

There was a silence. None liked to question the young soldier further; none liked to put the direct question whether or not the Ionian ambassador could have cause for suspecting the descendant of Hercules of harm against the Greeks. At length Agesilaus said, —

"I demand the word, and I claim the right to speak plainly. My son is young, but he is of the blood of Hyllus.

"Son, Pausanias is dear to thee. Man soon dies: man's name lives forever. Dear to thee if Pausanias is, dearer must be his name. In brief, the Ionian ambassadors complain of his arrogance towards the confederates; they demand his recall. Cimon has addressed a private letter to the Spartan host, with whom he lodged here, intimating that it may be

best for the honour of Pausanias, and for our weight with the allies, to hearken to the Ionian embassy. It is a grave question therefore, whether we should recall the regent or refuse to hear these charges. Thou art fresh from Byzantium; thou must know more of this matter than we. Loose thy tongue, put aside equivocation. Say thy mind; it is for us to decide afterwards what is our duty to the State."

"I thank thee, my father," said Lysander, colouring deeply at a compliment paid rarely to one so young, "and thus I answer thee:—

"Pausanias, in seeking to enforce discipline and preserve the Spartan supremacy, was at first somewhat harsh and severe to these Ionians, who had indeed but lately emancipated themselves from the Persian yoke, and who were little accustomed to steady rule. But of late he has been affable and courteous, and no complaint was urged against him for austerity at the time when this embassy was sent to you. Wherefore was it then sent? Partly, it may be, from motives of private hate, not public zeal, but partly because the Ionian race sees with reluctance and jealousy the hegemony of Sparta. I would speak plainly. It is not for me to say whether ye will or not that Sparta should retain the maritime supremacy of Hellas, but if ye do will it, ye will not recall Pausanias. No other than the conqueror of Plataea has a chance of maintaining that authority. Eager would the Ionians be upon any pretext, false or frivolous, to rid themselves of Pausanias. Artfully willing would be the Athenians in especial that ye listened to such pretexts; for, Pausanias gone, Athens remains and rules. On what belongs to the policy of the State it becomes not me to proffer a word, O ephors. In what I have said I speak what the whole armament thinks and murmurs. But this I may say, as soldier to whom the honour of his chief is dear: The recall of Pausanias may or may not be wise as a public act, but it will be regarded throughout all Hellas as a personal affront to your general; it will lower the royalty of Sparta, it will be an insult to the blood of Hercules. Forgive me, O venerable magistrates. I have fought by the side of Pausanias, and I cannot dare to think that the great conqueror of

Plataea, the man who saved Hellas from the Mede, the man who raised Sparta on that day to a renown which penetrated the farthest corners of the East, will receive from you other return than fame and glory. And fame and glory will surely make that proud spirit doubly Spartan."

Lysander paused, breathing hard and colouring deeply, — annoyed with himself for a speech of which both the length and the audacity were much more Ionian than Spartan.

The ephors looked at each other, and there was again silence.

"Son of Agesilaus," said Pericles, "thou hast proved thy Lacedæmonian virtues too well, and too high and general is thy repute amongst our army, as it is borne to our ears, for us to doubt thy purity and patriotism; otherwise, we might fear that whilst thou speakest in some contempt of Ionian wolves, thou hadst learned the arts of Ionian agoras. But enough: thou art dismissed. Go to thy home; glad the eyes of thy mother; enjoy the honours thou wilt find awaiting thee amongst thy coevals. Thou wilt learn later whether thou return to Byzantium, or whether a better field for thy valour may not be found in the nearer war with which Arcadia threatens us."

As soon as Lysander left the chamber, Agesilaus spoke: —

"Ye will pardon me, ephors, if I bade my son speak thus boldly. I need not say I am no vain, foolish father, desiring to raise the youth above his years. But making allowance for his partiality to the regent, ye will grant that he is a fair specimen of our young soldiery. Probably, as he speaks, so will our young men think. To recall Pausanias is to disgrace our general. Ye have my mind. If the regent be guilty of the darker charges insinuated, — correspondence with the Persian against Greece, — I know but one sentence for him, — Death. And it is because I would have you consider well how dread is such a charge, and how awful such a sentence, that I entreat you not lightly to entertain the one unless ye are prepared to meditate the other. As for the maritime supremacy of Sparta, I hold, as I have held before, that it is not within our councils to strive for it; it must pass from us.

We may surrender it later with dignity; if we recall our general on such complaints, we lose it with humiliation."

"I agree with Agesilaus," said another. "Pausanias is a Heracleid; my vote shall not insult him."

"I agree too with Agesilaus," said a third ephor, — "not because Pausanais is the Heracleid, but because he is the victorious general who demands gratitude and respect from every true Spartan."

"Be it so," said Periclides, who, seeing himself thus outvoted in the council, covered his disappointment with the self-control habitual to his race. "But be we in no hurry to give these Ionian legates their answer to-day. We must deliberate well how to send such a reply as may be most conciliating and prudent. And for the next few days we have an excuse for delay in the religious ceremonials due to the venerable Divinity of Fear, which commence to-morrow. Pass we to the other business before us; there are many whom we have kept waiting. Agesilaus, thou art excused from the public table to-day if thou wouldst sup with thy brave son at home."

"Nay," said Agesilaus, "my son will go to his pheidition, and I to mine, — as I did on the day when I lost my first-born."

CHAPTER III.

On quitting the Hall of the Ephors, Lysander found himself at once on the Spartan Agora, wherein that Hall was placed. This was situated on the highest of the five hills, over which the unwall'd city spread its scattered population, and was popularly called the Tower. Before the eyes of the young Spartan rose the statues, rude and antique, of Latona, the Pythian Apollo, and his sister Artemis, — venerable images to Lysander's early associations. The place which they consecrated was called Chorus; for there, in honour of Apollo, and in the most pompous of all the Spartan festivals, the young

men were accustomed to lead the sacred dance. The temple of Apollo himself stood a little in the background, and near to it that of Hera. But more vast than any image of a god was a colossal statue which represented the Spartan people; while on a still loftier pinnacle of the hill than that table-land which enclosed the Agora — dominating, as it were, the whole city — soared into the bright blue sky the sacred Chalciæcus, or Temple of the Brazen Pallas, darkening with its shadow another fane towards the left dedicated to the Lacedæmonian Muses, and receiving a gleam on the right from the brazen statue of Zeus, which was said by tradition to have been made by a disciple of Dædalus himself.

But short time had Lysander to note undisturbed the old familiar scenes. A crowd of his early friends had already collected round the doors of the Archeion, and rushed forward to greet and welcome him. The Spartan coldness and austerity of social intercourse vanished always before the enthusiasm created by the return to his native city of a man renowned for valour; and Lysander's fame had come back to Sparta before himself. Joyously and in triumph the young men bore away their comrade. As they passed through the centre of the Agora, where assembled the various merchants and farmers who, under the name of Pericæci, carried on the main business of the Laconian mart, and were often much wealthier than the Spartan citizens, trade ceased its hubbub, all drew near to gaze on the young warrior; and now, as they turned from the Agora, a group of eager women met them on the road, and shrill voices exclaimed: "Go, Lysander, thou hast fought well; go, and choose for thyself the maiden that seems to thee the fairest. Go, marry and get sons for Sparta."

Lysander's step seemed to tread on air, and tears of rapture stood in his downcast eyes. But suddenly all the voices hushed; the crowds drew back; his friends halted. Close by the great Temple of Fear, and coming from some place within its sanctuary, there approached towards the Spartan and his comrades a majestic woman, — a woman of so grand a step and port that, though her veil as yet hid her face, her form alone sufficed to inspire awe. All knew her by her gait; all

made way for Alithea, the widow of a king, the mother of Pausanias the regent. Lysander, lifting his eyes from the ground, impressed by the hush around him, recognized the form as it advanced slowly towards him, and, leaving his comrades behind, stepped forward to salute the mother of his chief. She, thus seeing him, turned slightly aside, and paused by a rude building of immemorial antiquity which stood near the temple. That building was the tomb of the mythical Orestes, whose bones were said to have been interred there by the command of the Delphian oracle. On a stone at the foot of the tomb sat calmly down the veiled woman and waited the approach of Lysander. When he came near, and alone, — all the rest remaining aloof and silent, — Alithea removed her veil, and a countenance grand and terrible as that of a Fate lifted its rigid looks to the young Spartan's eyes. Despite her age, — for she had passed into middle life before she had borne Pausanias, — Alithea retained all the traces of a marvellous and almost preterhuman beauty. But it was not the beauty of woman. No softness sat on those lips; no love beamed from those eyes. Stern, inexorable, — not a fault in her grand proportions, — the stoutest heart might have felt a throb of terror as the eye rested upon that pitiless and imposing front. And the deep voice of the Spartan warrior had a slight tremor in its tone as it uttered its respectful salutation.

"Draw near, Lysander. What sayest thou of my son?"

"I left him well and —"

"Does a Spartan mother first ask of the bodily health of an absent man-child? By the tomb of Orestes and near the Temple of Fear, a king's widow asks a Spartan soldier what he says of a Spartan chief."

"All Hellas," replied Lysander, recovering his spirits, "might answer thee best, Alithea; for all Hellas proclaimed that the bravest man at Plataea was thy son, my chief."

"And where did my son, thy chief, learn to boast of bravery? They tell me he inscribed the offerings to the Gods with his name as the victor of Plataea, — the battle won, not by one man, but assembled Greece. The inscription that dis-

honours him by its vainglory will be erased. To be brave is nought; Barbarians may be brave. But to dedicate bravery to his native land becomes a Spartan. He who is everything against a foe should count himself as nothing in the service of his country."

Lysander remained silent under the gaze of those fixed and imperious eyes.

"Youth," said Alithea, after a short pause, "if thou returnest to Byzantium, say this from Alithea to thy chief: 'From thy childhood, Pausanias, has thy mother feared for thee, and at the Temple of Fear did she sacrifice when she heard that thou wert victorious at Plataea; for in thy heart are the seeds of arrogance and pride, and victory to thine arms may end in ruin to thy name. And ever since that day does Alithea haunt the precincts of that temple. Come back and be Spartan, as thine ancestors were before thee, and Alithea will rejoice and think the Gods have heard her. But if thou seest within thyself one cause why thy mother should sacrifice to Fear lest her son should break the laws of Sparta or sully his Spartan name, humble thyself, and mourn that thou didst not perish at Plataea. By a temple and from a tomb I send thee warning.' Say this. I have done; join thy friends."

Again the veil fell over the face, and the figure of the woman remained seated at the tomb long after the procession had passed on, and the mirth of young voices was again released.

CHAPTER IV.

THE group that attended Lysander continued to swell as he mounted the acclivity on which his parental home was placed. The houses of the Spartan proprietors were at that day not closely packed together, as in the dense population of commercial towns. More like the villas of a suburb, they lay a little apart, on the unequal surface of the rugged ground,

perfectly plain and unadorned, covering a large space with ample courtyards, closed in, in front of the narrow streets. And still was in force the primitive law which ordained that doorways should be shaped only by the saw, and the ceilings by the axe; but in contrast to the rudeness of the private houses, at every opening in the street were seen the Doric pillars or graceful stairs of a temple, and high over all dominated the Tower-hill, or Acropolis, with the antique fane of Pallas Chalciæcus.

And so, loud and joyous, the procession bore the young warrior to the threshold of his home. It was an act of public honour to his fair repute and his proven valour; and the Spartan felt as proud of that uncereemonious attendance as ever did Roman chief sweeping under arches of triumph in the curule car.

At the threshold of the door stood his mother—for the tidings of his coming had preceded him—and his little brothers and sisters. His step quickened at the sight of these beloved faces.

"Bound forward, Lysander," said one of the train; "thou hast won the right to thy mother's kiss."

"But fail us not at the pheidition before sunset," cried another. "Every one of the obe will send his best contribution to the feast to welcome thee back. We shall have a rare banquet of it."

And so, as his mother drew him within the doors, his arm round her waist, and as the children clung to his cloak, to his knees, or sprung up to claim his kiss, the procession set up a kind of chanted shout, and left the warrior in his home.

"Oh, this is joy, joy!" said Lysander, with sweet tears in his eyes, as he sat in the women's apartment, his mother by his side and the little ones round him. "Where, save in Sparta, does a man love a home?"

And this exclamation, which might have astonished an Ionian,—seeing how much the Spartan civilians merged the individual in the State,—was yet true where the Spartan was wholly Spartan, where, by habit and association, he had learned to love the severities of the existence that surrounded

him, and where the routine of duties which took him from his home, whether for exercises or the public tables, made yet more precious the hours of rest and intimate intercourse with his family. For the gay pleasures and lewd resorts of other Greek cities were not known to the Spartan. Not for him were the cook-shops and baths and revels of Ionian idlers. When the State ceased to claim him, he had nothing but his Home.

As Lysander thus exclaimed, the door of the room had opened noiselessly, and Agesilaus stood unperceived at the entrance, and overheard his son. His face brightened singularly at Lysander's words. He came forward and opened his arms.

"Embrace me now, my boy! my brave boy! embrace me now! The ephors are not here."

Lysander turned, sprang up, and was in his father's arms.

"So thou art not changed. Byzantium has not spoiled thee. Thy name is uttered with praise unmixed with fear. All Persia's gold, all the great king's satrapies, could not medize my Lysander. Ah," continued the father, turning to his wife, "who could have predicted the happiness of this hour? Poor child! he was born sickly. Hera had already given us more sons than we could provide for, ere our lands were increased by the death of thy childless relatives. Wife, wife! when the family council ordained him to be exposed on Taygetus, when thou didst hide thyself lest thy tears should be seen, and my voice trembled as I said, 'Be the laws obeyed,' who could have guessed that the Gods would yet preserve him to be the pride of our house? Blessed be Zeus the Saviour and Hercules the Warrior!"

"And," said the mother, "blessed be Pausanias, the descendant of Hercules, who took the forlorn infant to his father's home, and who has reared him now to be the example of Spartan youths."

"Ah," said Lysander, looking up into his father's eyes, "if I can ever be worthy of your love, O my father, forget not, I pray thee, that it is to Pausanias I owe life, home, and a Spartan's glorious destiny."

"I forget it not," answered Agesilaus, with a mournful and

serious expression of countenance. "And on this I would speak to thee. Thy mother must spare thee a while to me. Come, I lean on thy shoulder instead of my staff."

Agesilaus led his son into the large hall, which was the main chamber of the house; and pacing up and down the wide and solitary floor, questioned him closely as to the truth of the stories respecting the regent which had reached the ephors.

"Thou must speak with naked heart to me," said Agesilaus, "for I tell thee that, if I am Spartan, I am also man and father; and I would serve him who saved thy life and taught thee how to fight for thy country, in every way that may be lawful to a Spartan and a Greek."

Thus addressed, and convinced of his father's sincerity, Lysander replied with ingenuous and brief simplicity. He granted that Pausanias had exposed himself with a haughty imprudence, which it was difficult to account for, to the charges of the Ionians. "But," he added, with that shrewd observation which his affection for Pausanias rather than his experience of human nature had taught him, — "But we must remember that in Pausanias we are dealing with no ordinary man. If he has faults of judgment which a Spartan rarely commits, he has, O my father, a force of intellect and passion which a Spartan as rarely knows. Shall I tell you the truth? Our State is too small for him. But would it not have been too small for Hercules? Would the laws of Ægimius have permitted Hercules to perform his labours and achieve his conquests? This vast and fiery nature, suddenly released from the cramps of our customs, which Pausanias never in his youth regarded save as galling, expands itself, as an eagle long caged would outspread its wings."

"I comprehend," said Agesilaus, thoughtfully, and somewhat sadly. "There have been moments in my own life when I regarded Sparta as a prison. In my early manhood I was sent on a mission to Corinth. Its pleasures, its wild tumult of gay license, dazzled and inebriated me. I said, 'This it is to live.' I came back to Sparta sullen and discontented. But then, happily, I saw thy mother at the festival of Diana,

—we loved each other, we married; and when I was permitted to take her to my home, I became sobered and was a Spartan again. I comprehend. Poor Pausanias! But luxury and pleasure, though they charm awhile, do not fill up the whole of a soul like that of our Heracleid. From these he may recover; but Ambition,—that is the true liver of Tantalus, and grows larger under the beak that feeds on it. What is his ambition, if Sparta be too small for him?”

“I think his ambition would be to make Sparta as big as himself.”

Agesilaus stroked his chin musingly.

“And how?”

“I cannot tell, I can only guess. But the Persian war, if I may judge by what I hear and see, cannot roll away and leave the boundaries of each Greek State the same. Two States now stand forth prominent, — Athens and Sparta. Themistocles and Cimon aim at making Athens the head of Hellas. Perhaps Pausanias aims to effect for Sparta what they would effect for Athens.”

“And what thinkest thou of such a scheme?”

“Ask me not. I am too young, too inexperienced, and perhaps too Spartan to answer rightly.”

“Too Spartan, because thou art too covetous of power for Sparta?”

“Too Spartan, because I may be too anxious to keep Sparta what she is.”

Agesilaus smiled. “We are of the same mind, my son. Think not that the rocky defiles which enclose us shut out from our minds all the ideas that new circumstance strikes from Time. I have meditated on what thou sayest Pausanias may scheme. It is true that the invasion of the Mede must tend to raise up one State in Greece to which the others will look for a head. I have asked myself, Can Sparta be that State? and my reason tells me, No. Sparta is lost if she attempt it. She may become something else, but she cannot be Sparta. Such a State must become maritime, and depend on fleets. Our inland situation forbids this. True, we have ports in which the Perioeci flourish; but did we use them for

a permanent policy, the Perioeci must become our masters. These five villages would be abandoned for a mart on the sea-shore. This mother of men would be no more. A State that so aspires must have ample wealth at its command. We have none. We might raise tribute from other Greek cities; but for that purpose we must have fleets again, to overawe and compel, for no tribute will be long voluntary. A State that would be the active governor of Hellas must have lives to spare in abundance. We have none, unless we always do hereafter as we did at Plateæ, — raise an army of Helots; seven Helots to one Spartan. How long, if we did so, would the Helots obey us, and meanwhile how would our lands be cultivated? A State that would be the centre of Greece, must cultivate all that can charm and allure strangers. We banish strangers, and what charms and allures them would womanize us. More than all, a State that would obtain the sympathies of the turbulent Hellenic populations must have the most popular institutions. It must be governed by a Demus. We are an Oligarchic Aristocracy, — a disciplined camp of warriors, not a licentious agora. Therefore, Sparta cannot assume the head of a Greek confederacy, except in the rare seasons of actual war; and the attempt to make her the head of such a confederacy would cause changes so repugnant to our manners and habits that it would be fraught with destruction to him who made the attempt, or to us if he succeeded. Wherefore, to sum up, the ambition of Pausanias is in this impracticable, and must be opposed."

"And Athens," cried Lysander, with a slight pang of natural and national jealousy, — "Athens, then, must wrest from Pausanias the hegemony he now holds for Sparta, and Athens must be what the Athenian ambition covets."

"We cannot help it, — she must; but can it last? Impossible! And woe to her if she ever comes in contact with the bronze of Laconian shields. But in the mean while what is to be done with this great and awful Heracleid? They accuse him of medizing, of secret conspiracy with Persia itself. Can that be possible?"

"If so, it is but to use Persia on behalf of Sparta. If he

would subdue Greece, it is not for the King, it is for the race of Hercules."

"Ay, ay, ay," cried Agesilaus, shading his face with his hand. "All becomes clear to me now. Listen. Did I openly defend Pausanias before the ephors, I should injure his cause. But when they talk of his betraying Hellas and Sparta, I place before them nakedly and broadly their duty if that charge be true. For if true, O my son, Pausanias must die as criminals die."

"Die! criminal! a Heracleid! king's blood! the victor of Plataea, — my friend Pausanias!"

"Rather he than Sparta. What sayest thou?"

"Neither, neither," exclaimed Lysander, wringing his hands; "impossible both!"

"Impossible both, be it so! I place before the ephors the terrors of accrediting that charge, in order that they may repudiate it. For the lesser ones it matters not; he is in no danger there, save that of fine. And his gold," added Agesilaus, with a curved lip of disdain, "will both condemn and save him. For the rest, I would spare him the dishonour of being publicly recalled, and to say truth, I would save Sparta the peril she might incur from his wrath if she inflicted on him that slight. But mark me, he himself must resign his command voluntarily, and return to Sparta. Better so for him and his pride, for he cannot keep the hegemony against the will of the Ionians, whose fleet is so much larger than ours, and it is to his gain if his successor lose it, not he. But better, not only for his pride, but for his glory and his name, that he should come from these scenes of fierce temptation, and, since birth made him a Spartan, learn here again to conform to what he cannot change. I have spoken thus plainly to thee. Use the words I have uttered as thou best may, after thy return to Pausanias, which I will strive to make speedy. But while we talk, there goes on danger, — danger still of his abrupt recall; for there are those who will seize every excuse for it. Enough of these grave matters: the sun is sinking towards the west, and thy companions await thee at thy feast; mine will be eager to greet me on

thy return, and thy little brothers, who go with me to my pheidition, will hear thee so praised that they will long for the crypteia, — long to be men, and find some future Plataea for themselves. May the Gods forbid it! War is a terrible unsettler. Time saps States as a tide the cliff. War is an inundation, and when it ebbs, a landmark has vanished."

CHAPTER V.

NOTHING so largely contributed to the peculiar character of Spartan society as the uniform custom of taking the principal meal at a public table. It conduced to four objects, — the precise status of aristocracy, since each table was formed according to title and rank; equality among aristocrats, since each at the same table was held the equal of the other; military union, for as they feasted, so they fought, being formed into divisions in the field according as they messed together at home; and, lastly, that sort of fellowship in public opinion which intimate association amongst those of the same rank and habit naturally occasions. These tables in Sparta were supplied by private contributions: each head of a family was obliged to send a certain portion at his own cost, and according to the number of his children. If his fortune did not allow him to do this, he was excluded from the public tables. Hence a certain fortune was indispensable to the pure Spartan, and this was one reason why it was permitted to expose infants if the family threatened to be too large for the father's means. The general arrangements were divided into *syssitia*, according, perhaps, to the number of families and correspondent to the divisions, or *obes*, acknowledged by the State. But these larger sections were again subdivided into companies, or clubs, of fifteen, vacancies being filled up by ballot; but one vote could exclude. And since, as we have said, the companies were marshalled in the field according to their association at the table, it is clear that fathers of grave

years and of high station (station in Sparta increased with years) could not have belonged to the same table as the young men, their sons. Their boys under a certain age they took to their own *pheiditia*, where the children sat upon a lower bench, and partook of the simplest dishes of the fare.

Though the cheer at these public tables was habitually plain, yet upon occasion it was enriched by presents to the after-course of game and fruit.

Lysander was received by his old comrades with that cordiality in which was mingled for the first time a certain manly respect, due to feats in battle, and so flattering to the young.

The prayer to the Gods, correspondent to the modern grace, and the pious libations being concluded, the attendant Helots served the black broth, and the party fell to, with the appetite produced by hardy exercise and mountain air.

"What do the allies say to the black broth?" asked a young Spartan.

"They do not comprehend its merits," answered Lysander.

CHAPTER VI.

EVERYTHING in the familiar life to which he had returned, delighted the young Lysander. But for anxious thoughts about Pausanias, he would have been supremely blessed. To him the various scenes of his early years brought no associations of the restraint and harshness which revolted the more luxurious nature and the fiercer genius of Pausanias. The plunge into the frigid waters of Eurotas, the sole bath permitted to the Spartans¹ at a time when the rest of Greece had already carried the art of bathing into voluptuous refinement; the sight of the vehement contests of the boys, drawn up as in battle, at the game of football, or in detached engagements, sparing each other so little that the popular belief out

¹ Except occasionally the dry sudorific bath, all warm bathing was strictly forbidden as enervating.

of Sparta was that they were permitted to tear out each other's eyes,¹ but subjecting strength to every skilful art that gymnastics could teach; the mimic war on the island, near the antique trees of the Plane Garden, waged with weapons of wood and blunted iron, and the march regulated to the music of flutes and lyres; nay, even the sight of the stern altar, at which boys had learned to bear the anguish of stripes without a murmur, — all produced in this primitive and intensely national intelligence an increased admiration for the ancestral laws which, carrying patience, fortitude, address, and strength to the utmost perfection, had formed a handful of men into the calm lords of a fierce population, and placed the fenceless villages of Sparta beyond a fear of the external assaults and the civil revolutions which perpetually stormed the citadels and agitated the market-places of Hellenic cities. His was not the mind to perceive that much was relinquished for the sake of that which was gained, or to comprehend that there was more which consecrates humanity in one stormy day of Athens than in a serene century of iron Lacedæmon. But there is ever beauty of soul where there is enthusiastic love of country; and the young Spartan was wise in his own Dorian way.

The religious festival which had provided the ephors with an excuse for delaying their answer to the Ionian envoys occupied the city. The youths and the maidens met in the sacred chorus; and Lysander, standing by amidst the gazers, suddenly felt his heart beat. A boy pulled him by the skirt of his mantle.

"Lysander, hast thou yet scolded Percalus?" said the boy's voice, archly.

"My young friend," answered Lysander, colouring high, "Percalus hath vouchsafed me as yet no occasion; and, indeed, she alone, of all the friends whom I left behind, does not seem to recognize me."

¹ An evident exaggeration. The Spartans had too great a regard for the physical gifts as essential to warlike uses, to permit cruelties that would have blinded their young warriors. And they even forbade the practice of the *pancratium* as ferocious and needlessly dangerous to life.

His eyes, as he spoke, rested, with a mute reproach in their gaze, on the form of a virgin who had just paused in the choral dance, and whose looks were bent obdurately on the ground. Her luxuriant hair was drawn upward from cheek and brow, braided into a knot at the crown of the head, in the fashion so trying to those who have neither bloom nor beauty, so exquisitely becoming to those who have both; and the maiden, even amid Spartan girls, was pre-eminently lovely. It is true that the sun had somewhat embrowned the smooth cheek; but the stately throat and the rounded arms were admirably fair,—not, indeed, with the pale and dead whiteness which the Ionian women sought to obtain by art, but with the delicate rose-hue of Hebe's youth. Her garment, of snow-white wool, fastened over both shoulders with large golden clasps, was without sleeves, fitting not too tightly to the harmonious form, and leaving more than the ankle free to the easy glide of the dance. Taller than Hellenic women usually were, but about the average height of her Spartan companions, her shape was that which the sculptors give to Artemis. Light and feminine and virginlike, but with all the rich vitality of a divine youth, with a force, not indeed of a man, but such as art would give to the goddess whose step bounds over the mountain top, and whose arm can launch the shaft from the silver bow,—yet was there something in the mien and face of Perceus more subdued and bashful than in those of most of the girls around her; and as if her ear had caught Lysander's words, a smile just now played round her lips, and gave to all the countenance a wonderful sweetness. Then, as it became her turn once more to join in the circling measure, she lifted her eyes, directed them full upon the young Spartan, and the eyes said plainly, "Ungrateful! I forget thee,—I!"

It was but one glance, and she seemed again wholly intent upon the dance; but Lysander felt as if he had tasted the nectar and caught a glimpse of the courts of the Gods. No further approach was made by either, although intervals in the evening permitted it. But if on the one hand there was in Sparta an intercourse between the youth of both sexes

wholly unknown in most of the Grecian States, and if that intercourse made marriages of love especially more common there than elsewhere, yet when love did actually exist, and was acknowledged by some young pair, they shunned public notice; the passion became a secret, or confidants to it were few. Then came the charm of stealth, — to woo and to win, as if the treasure were to be robbed by a lover from the heaven unknown to man. Accordingly, Lysander now mixed with the spectators, conversed cheerfully, only at distant intervals permitted his eyes to turn to Percalus, and when her part in the chorus had concluded, a sign, undetected by others, seemed to have been exchanged between them, and, a little while after, Lysander had disappeared from the assembly.

He wandered down the street called the Aphetais, and after a little while the way became perfectly still and lonely; for the inhabitants had crowded to the sacred festival, and the houses lay quiet and scattered. So he went on, passing the ancient temple in which Ulysses is said to have dedicated a statue in honour of his victory in the race over the suitors of Penelope, and paused where the ground lay bare and rugged around many a monument to the fabled chiefs of the heroic age. Upon a crag that jutted over a silent hollow covered with oleander and arbut, and here and there the wild-rose, the young lover sat down, waiting patiently; for the eyes of Percalus had told him he should not wait in vain. Afar he saw, in the exceeding clearness of the atmosphere, the Tænarium, or Temple of Neptune, unprophetic of the dark connection that shrine would hereafter have with him whom he then honoured as a chief worthy, after death, of a monument amidst those heroes; and the gale that cooled his forehead wandered to him from the field of the Hellanium, in which the envoys of Greece had taken counsel how to oppose the march of Xerxes, when his myriads first poured into Europe.

Alas! all the great passions that distinguish race from race pass away in the tide of generations. The enthusiasm of soul which gives us heroes and demigods for ancestors, and hallows their empty tombs; the vigour of thoughtful freedom which guards the soil from invasion, and shivers force upon

the edge of intelligence; the heroic age and the civilized alike depart; and he who wanders through the glens of Laconia can scarcely guess where was the monument of Lelex, or the field of the Hellanium. And yet on the same spot where sat the young Spartan warrior, waiting for the steps of the beloved one, may, at this very hour, some rustic lover be seated, with a heart beating with like emotions, and an ear listening for as light a tread. Love alone never passes away from the spot where its footstep hath once pressed the earth and reclaimed the savage. Traditions, freedom, the thirst for glory, art, laws, creeds, vanish; but the eye thrills the breast, and hand warms to hand, as before the name of Lycurgus was heard, or Helen was borne a bride to the home of Menelaus. Under the influence of this power, then, something of youth is still retained by nations the most worn with time. But the power thus eternal in nations is shortlived for the individual being. Brief indeed in the life of each is that season which lasts forever in the life of all. From the old age of nations glory fades away; but in their utmost decrepitude there is still a generation young enough to love. To the individual man, however, glory alone remains when the snows of ages have fallen, and love is but the memory of a boyish dream. No wonder that the Greek genius, half incredulous of the soul, clung with such tenacity to Youth. What a sigh from the heart of the old sensuous world breathes in the strain of Mimnermus, bewailing with so fierce and so deep a sorrow the advent of the years in which man is loved no more!

Lysander's eye was still along the solitary road when he heard a low, musical laugh behind him. He started in surprise, and beheld Percalus. Her mirth was increased by his astonished gaze till, in revenge, he caught both her hands, and drawing her towards him, kissed, not without a struggle, the lips into serious gravity.

Extricating herself from him, the maiden put on an air of offended dignity, and Lysander, abashed at his own audacity, muttered some broken words of penitence.

"But, indeed," he added, as he saw the cloud vanishing from her brow, "indeed thou wert so provoking, and so irre-

sistibly beauteous. And how camest thou here, as if thou hadst dropped from the heavens?"

"Didst thou think," answered Percalus, demurely, "that I could be suspected of following thee? Nay; I tarried till I could accompany Euryclea to her home yonder, and then, slipping from her by her door, I came across the grass and the glen to search for the arrow shot yesterday in the hollow below thee." So saying, she tripped from the crag by his side into the nooked recess below, which was all out of sight, in case some passenger should pass the road, and where, stooping down, she seemed to busy herself in searching for the shaft amidst the odorous shrubs.

Lysander was not slow in following her footstep.

"Thine arrow is here," said he, placing his hand to his heart.

"Fie! The Ionian poets teach thee these compliments."

"Not so. Who hath sung more of Love and his arrows than our own Alcman?"

"Mean you the regent's favourite brother?"

"Oh, no! The ancient Alcman, — the poet whom even the ephors sanction."

Percalus ceased to seek for the arrow, and they seated themselves on a little knoll in the hollow, side by side, and frankly she gave him her hand, and listened, with rosy cheek and rising bosom, to his honest wooing. He told her, truly, how her image had been with him in the strange lands; how faithful he had been to the absent, amidst all the beauties of the Isles and of the East. He reminded her of their early days, — how, even as children, each had sought the other. He spoke of his doubts, his fears, lest he should find himself forgotten or replaced; and how overjoyed he had been when at last her eye replied to his.

"And we understood each other so well, did we not, Percalus? Here we have so often met before; here we parted last; here thou knewest I should go; here I knew that I might await thee."

Percalus did not answer at much length, but what she said sufficed to enchant her lover; for the education of a Spartan

maid did not favour the affected concealment of real feelings. It could not, indeed, banish what Nature prescribes to women, — the modest self-esteem, the difficulty to utter by word what eye and blush reveal, — nor, perhaps, something of that arch and innocent malice which enjoys to taste the power which beauty exercises before the warm heart will freely acknowledge the power which sways itself. But the girl, though a little wilful and high-spirited, was a candid, pure, and noble creature, and too proud of being loved by Lysander to feel more than a maiden's shame to confess her own.

"And when I return," said the Spartan, "ah, then look out and take care; for I shall speak to thy father, gain his consent to our betrothal, and then carry thee away, despite all thy struggles, to the bridesmaid, and these long locks, alas! will fall."

"I thank thee for thy warning, and will find my arrow in time to guard myself," said Percalus, turning away her face, but holding up her hand in pretty menace. "But where is the arrow? I must make haste and find it."

"Thou wilt have time enough, courteous Amazon, in mine absence, for I must soon return to Byzantium."

PERCALUS. — "Art thou so sure of that?"

LYSANDER. — "Why, dost thou doubt it?"

PERCALUS (*rising, and moving the arbutu boughs aside with the tip of her sandal.*) — "And unless thou wouldst wait very long for my father's consent, perchance thou mayst have to ask for it very soon, — too soon to prepare thy courage for so great a peril."

LYSANDER (*perplexed*). — "What canst thou mean? By all the Gods, I pray thee speak plain."

PERCALUS. — "If Pausanias be recalled, wouldst thou still go to Byzantium?"

LYSANDER. — "No; but I think the ephors have decided not so to discredit their general."

PERCALUS (*shaking her head incredulously*). — "Count not on their decision so surely, valiant warrior; and suppose that Pausanias is recalled, and that some one else is sent in his place whose absence would prevent thy obtaining that consent

thou covetest, and so frustrate thy designs on — on [she added, blushing scarlet] — on these poor locks of mine.”

LYSANDER (*starting*). — “Oh, Percalus, do I conceive thee aright? Hast thou any reason to think that thy father, Dorcis, will be sent to replace Pausanias, — the great Pausanias!”

PERCALUS (*a little offended at a tone of expression which seemed to slight her father's pretensions*). — “Dorcis, my father, is a warrior whom Sparta reckons second to none, — a most brave captain, and every inch a Spartan; but — but —”

LYSANDER. — “Percalus, do not trifle with me. Thou knowest how my fate has been linked to the regent's. Thou must have intelligence not shared even by my father, himself an ephor. What is it?”

PERCALUS. — “Thou wilt be secret, my Lysander; for what I may tell thee I can only learn at the hearthstone.”

LYSANDER. — “Fear me not. Is not all between us a secret?”

PERCALUS. — “Well, then, Periclides and my father, as thou art aware, are near kinsmen. And when the Ionian envoys first arrived, it was my father who was specially appointed to see to their fitting entertainment. And that same night I overheard Dorcis say to my mother, ‘If I could succeed Pausanias, and conclude this war, I should be consoled for not having commanded at Plataea.’ And my mother, who is proud for her husband's glory, as a woman should be, said, ‘Why not strain every nerve, as for a crown in Olympia? Periclides will aid thee; thou wilt win.’”

LYSANDER. — “But that was the first night of the Ionians' arrival.”

PERCALUS. — “Since then I believe that thy father and others of the ephors overruled Periclides and Zeuxidamus, for I have heard all that passed between my father and mother on the subject. But early this morning, while my mother was assisting to attire me for the festival, Periclides himself called at our house; and before I came from home, my mother, after a short conference with Dorcis, said to me, in the exuberance of her joy: ‘Go, child, and call here all the maidens, as thy father ere long will go to outshine all the Grecian chiefs.’”

So that if my father does go, thou wilt remain in Sparta. Then, my beloved Lysander—and—and— But what ails thee? Is that thought so sorrowful?"

LYSANDER. — "Pardon me, — pardon; thou art a Spartan maid; thou must comprehend what should be felt by a Spartan soldier when he thinks of humiliation and ingratitude to his chief. Gods! the man who rolled back the storm of the Mede to be insulted in the face of Hellas by the government of his native city! The blush of shame upon his cheek burns my own."

The warrior bowed his face in his clasped hands.

Not a resentful thought natural to female vanity and exacting affection then crossed the mind of the Spartan girl. She felt at once, by the sympathy of kindred nurture, all that was torturing her lover. She was even prouder of him that he forgot her for the moment to be so truthful to his chief; and abandoning the innocent coyness she had before shown, she put her arm round his neck with a pure and sisterly fondness, and, kissing his brow, whispered soothingly, "It is for me to ask pardon that I did not think of this, that I spoke so foolishly; but comfort — thy chief is not disgraced even by recall. Let them recall Pausanias, they cannot recall his glory. When, in Sparta, did we ever hold a brave man discredited by obedience to the government? None are disgraced who do not disgrace themselves."

"Ah, my Percalus, so I should say; but so will not think Pausanias, nor the allies; and in this slight to him I see the shadow of the Erinnys. But it may not be true yet, nor can Periclides of himself dispose thus of the Lacedæmonian armies."

"We will hope so, dear Lysander," said Percalus, who, born to be man's helpmate, then only thought of consoling and cheering him. "And if thou dost return to the camp, tarry as long as thou wilt, thou wilt find Percalus the same."

"The Gods bless thee, maiden!" said Lysander, with grateful passion, "and blessed be the State that rears such women; elsewhere Greece knows them not."

"And does Greece elsewhere know such men?" asked Per-

calus, raising her graceful head. "But so late, — is it possible? See where the shadows are falling! Thou wilt but be in time for thy pheidition. Farewell."

"But when to meet again?"

"Alas! when we can." She sprang lightly away; then, turning her face as she fled, added, "Look out! thou wert taught to steal in thy boyhood, — steal an interview. I will be thy accomplice."

CHAPTER VII.

THAT night, as Agesilaus was leaving the public table at which he supped, Periclides, who was one of the same company, but who had been unusually silent during the entertainment, approached him and said, "Let us walk towards thy home together; the moon is up, and will betray listeners to our converse, should there be any."

"And in default of the moon, thy years, if not yet mine, permit thee a lantern, Periclides."

"I have not drunk enough to need it," answered the chief of the ephors, with unusual pleasantry; "but as thou art the younger man, I will lean on thine arm, so as to be closer to thine ear."

"Thou hast something secret and grave to say, then?"

Periclides nodded.

As they ascended the rugged acclivity, different groups, equally returning home from the public tables, passed them. Though the sacred festival had given excuse for prolonging the evening meal, and the wine-cup had been replenished beyond the abstemious wont, still each little knot of revellers passed and dispersed in a sober and decorous quiet which perhaps no other eminent city in Greece could have exhibited; young and old equally grave and noiseless. For the Spartan youth, no fair Hetæræ then opened homes adorned with flowers and gay with wit no less than alluring with Beauty; but as the streets grew more deserted, there stood in the thick

shadow of some angle, or glided furtively by some winding wall, a bridegroom lover, tarrying till all was still, to steal to the arms of the lawful wife, whom for years perhaps he might not openly acknowledge, and carry in triumph to his home.

But not of such young adventurers thought the sage Pericles, though his voice was as low as a lover's "hist!" and his step as stealthy as a bridegroom's tread.

"My friend," said he, "with the faint gray of the dawn there comes to my house a new messenger from the camp, and the tidings he brings change all our decisions. The Festival does not permit us as ephors to meet in public, or, at least, I think thou wilt agree with me it is more prudent not to do so. All we should do now should be in strict privacy."

"But hush! from whom the message, — Pausanias?"

"No; from Aristides the Athenian."

"And to what effect?"

"The Ionians have revolted from the Spartan hegemony, and ranged themselves under the Athenian flag."

"Gods! what I feared has already come to pass."

"And Aristides writes to me, with whom you remember that he has the hospitable ties, that the Athenians cannot abandon their Ionian allies and kindred who thus appeal to them, and that if Pausanias remain, open war may break out between the two divisions into which the fleet of Hellas is now rent."

"This must not be, for it would be war at sea; we and the Peloponnesians have far the fewer vessels, the less able seamen. Sparta would be conquered."

"Rather than Sparta should be conquered, must we not recall her general?"

"I would give all my lands, and sink out of the rank of Equal, that this had not chanced," said Agesilaus, bitterly.

"Hist! hist! not so loud."

"I had hoped we might induce the regent himself to resign the command, and so have been spared the shame and the pain of an act that affects the hero-blood of our kings. Could not that be done yet?"

"Dost thou think so? Pausanias resign in the midst of a mutiny? Thou canst not know the man."

"Thou art right, — impossible. I see no option now. He must be recalled. But the Spartan hegemony is then gone, — gone forever; gone to Athens."

"Not so. Sparta hath many a worthy son besides this too arrogant Heracleid."

"Yes; but where his genius of command, where his immense renown, where a man, I say, not in Sparta, but in all Greece, fit to cope with Aristides and Cimon in the camp, with Themistocles in the city of our rivals? If Pausanias fails, who succeeds?"

"Be not deceived. What must be, must; it is but a little time earlier than Necessity would have fixed. Wouldst thou take the command?"

"I? The Gods forbid!"

"Then, if thou wilt not, I know but one man."

"And who is he?"

"Dorcis."

Agésilas started, and by the light of the moon gazed full upon the face of the chief ephor.

"Thy kinsman, Dorcis? Ah! Periclides, hast thou schemed this from the first?"

Periclides changed colour at finding himself thus abruptly detected, and as abruptly charged; however, he answered with laconic dryness, —

"Friend, did I scheme the revolt of the Ionians? But if thou knowest a better man than Dorcis, speak. Is he not brave?"

"Yes."

"Skilful?"

"No. Tut! thou art as conscious as I am that thou mightest as well compare the hat on thy brow to the brain it hides as liken the stolid Dorcis to the fiery but profound Heracleid."

"Ay, ay. But there is one merit the hat has which the brow has not, — it can do no harm. Shall we send our chiefs to be made worse men by Eastern manners? Dorcis has dull

wit, — granted; no arts can corrupt it: he may not save the hegemony, but he will return as he went, — a Spartan.”

“Thou art right again, and a wise man, Periclides. I submit. Thou hast my vote for Dorcis. What else hast thou designed? for I see now that whatever thou designest that wilt thou accomplish; and our meeting on the Archeion is but an idle form.”

“Nay, nay,” said Periclides, with his austere smile, “thou givest me a wit and a will that I have not. But as chief of the ephors I watch over the State. And though I design nothing, this I would counsel, — On the day we answer the Ionians, we shall tell them, ‘What ye ask, we long since proposed to do, and Dorcis is already on the seas as successor to Pausanias.’”

“When will Dorcis leave?” said Agesilaus, curtly.

“If the other ephors concur, to-morrow night.”

“Here we are at my doors: wilt thou not enter?”

“No; I have others yet to see. I knew we should be of the same mind.”

Agesilaus made no reply; but as he entered the courtyard of his house, he muttered uneasily, —

“And if Lysander is right, and Sparta is too small for Pausanias, do not we bring back a giant who will widen it to his own girth, and raze the old foundations to make room for the buildings he would add?”

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(UNFINISHED.)

THE pages covered by the manuscript of this uncompleted story of "Pausanias" are scarcely more numerous than those which its author has filled with the notes made by him from works consulted with special reference to the subject of it. Those notes (upon Greek and Persian antiquities) are wholly without interest for the general public; they illustrate the author's conscientious industry, but they afford no clew to the plot of his romance. Under the sawdust, however, thus fallen in the industrial process of an imaginative work unhappily unfinished, I have found two specimens of original composition. They are rough sketches of songs expressly composed for "Pausanias;" and since they are not included in the foregoing portion of it, I think they may properly be added here. The unrhymed lyrics introduced by my father into some of the opening chapters of this romance appear to have been suggested by some fragments of Mimnermus, and composed about the same time as "The Lost Tales of Miletus." Indeed, one of them has been already printed in that work. The following verses, however, which are rhymed, bear evidence of having been composed at a much earlier period. I know not whether it was my father's intention to discard them altogether, or to alter them materially, or to insert them, without alteration, in some later portion of the romance; but I print them here precisely as they are written.

L.

FOR PAUSANIAS.

Partially borrowed from Aristophanes' "Peace," v. 1127, etc.

AWAY, away, with the helm and greaves,
 Away with the leeks and cheese!'
 I have conquered my passion for wounds and blows,
 And the worst that I wish to the worst of my foes
 Is the glory and gain
 Of a year's campaign
 On a diet of leeks and cheese.

I love to drink by my own warm hearth,
 Nourished with logs from the pine-clad heights,
 Which were hewn in the blaze of the summer sun
 To treasure his rays for the winter nights
 On the hearth where my grandam spun.

I love to drink of the grape I press,
 And to drink with a friend of yore;
 Quick! bring me a bough from the myrtle-tree
 Which is budding afresh by Nicander's door.
 Tell Nicander himself he must sup with me,
 And along with the bough from his myrtle-tree
 We will circle the lute, in a choral glee
 To the goddess of corn and peace;
 For Nicander and I were fast friends at school.
 Here he comes! We are boys once more.

When the grasshopper chants in the bells of thyme
 I love to watch if the Lemnian grape²
 Is donning the purple that decks its prime,
 And, as I sit at my porch to see,
 With my little one trying to scale my knee,
 To join in the grasshopper's chant, and sing
 To Apollo and Pan from the heart of Spring.³
 Listen, oh, list!

¹ Τυροῦ τε καὶ κρομμύων. Cheese and onions, — the rations furnished to soldiers in campaign.

² It ripened earlier than the others. The words of the Chorus are: τὰς Ἀημνίας ἀμπέλους εἰ πεκαίνουσιν ἤδη.

³ Variation, —

"What a blessing is life in a noon of Spring."

Here ye not, neighbours, the voice of Peace?

"The swallow I hear in the household eaves,"

Io Ægien! Peace!

"And the skylark at poise o'er the bended sheaves,"

Io Ægien! Peace!

Here and there, everywhere, hear we Peace,

Hear her, and see her, and clasp her, — Peace!

The grasshopper chants in the bells of thyme,

And the halcyon is back to her nest in Greece!

IN PRAISE OF THE ATHENIAN KNIGHTS.

Imitated from the "Knights" of Aristophanes, v. 565, etc.

CHANT the fame of the Knights, or in war or in peace,
Chant the darlings of Athens,¹ the bulwarks of Greece;
Pressing foremost to glory, on wave and on shore,
Where the steed has no footing they win with the oar.²

On their bosoms the battle splits, wasting its shock;
If they charge like the whirlwind, they stand like the rock.
Ha! they count not the numbers, they scan not the ground;
When a foe comes in sight on his lances they bound.

Fails a foot in its speed? Heed it not. One and all³
Spurn the earth that they spring from, and own not a fall.
Oh, the darlings of Athens, the bulwarks of Greece,
Wherefore envy the lovelocks they perfume in peace?

Wherefore scowl if they fondle a quail or a dove,
Or inscribe on a myrtle the names that they love?
Does Alcides not teach us how valour is mild?
Lo, at rest from his labours he plays with a child.

When the slayer of Python has put down his bow,
By his lute and his lovelocks Apollo we know;
Feared, O rowers, those gallants their beauty to spoil
When they sat on your benches and shared in your toil?

¹ Variation, —

"The adorners of Athens, the bulwarks of Greece."

² Variation, —

"Keenest racers to glory, on wave or on shore,
By the rush of the steed or the stroke of the oar!"

³ Variation, —

"Falls there one? Never help him! Our knights one and all."

When with laughter they rowed to your cry, "Hippopai,"
"On, ye coursers of wood, for the palm wreath, away!"
Did those dainty youths ask you to store in your holds
Or a cask from their crypt or a lamb from their folds?

No; they cried, "We are here both to fight and to fast.
Place us first in the fight, at the board serve us last!
Wheresoever is peril, we knights lead the way;
Wheresoever is hardship, we claim it as pay.

"Call us proud, O Athenians, we know it full well,
And we give you the life we're too haughty to sell."
Hail the stoutest in war, hail the mildest in peace,
Hail the darlings of Athens, the bulwarks of Greece!

THE END.